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STILL MATTER**

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SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

AS A RETIRED University of Toronto professor who served a tenure on the engineering faculty's admissions committee for several years, I continue to be upset by the dominance of high marks in candidate selection procedures for university admission ("You got seventh what grade?" University rankings '07, Nov. 26). Although wearing the hat of a slow learner throughout public and high schools, I managed to obtain a Ph.D. in chemistry at U of T. I then earned a full professorship, with most appointments in three departments, and wrote 126 peer-reviewed research papers and five books. Ever in my mind when reading in your issue of schools recruiting 90 per cent on the basis of high school residence placements. Obviously, I would never have been the *middle* of such a residence.

I worry about those who have much to add to academic, professional and private life and are denied the route of formal higher education by shallow university admission policies.
Jon Van Loon, Markham, Ont.

THANKS FOR SHOWING some of the worst dressed people in Canada ("The You are back") Why not just say "jeans or no jeans"?
Janet Menzies, Etobicoke, Ont.

AFTER HAVING spent about a third of their lives in a school system that trained them to interpret and measure, university students are finding themselves in as various a mess where they actually have to think and understand ("Some of us know this"). In spite of their aggressive high school GPs and wonderful letters of recommendation, young people are entering college with no skills. This situation is truly sad commentary about accountability: college teachers blame high school teachers, high school teachers blame elementary teachers, elementary teachers blame parents, parents blame who, the school? The back has to stop somewhere, somebody has to say, "This kid can't read" or "This kid can't write" or "This kid can't count." And then somebody actually has to do something. Learning is not a race. And teaching is not killing.
Heather Evans, Levy, Que.

I AM WRITING to express my frustration that you still don't include any art schools. Can-

ada has four established art schools, each of which has different reputations and specialties. At my art school, there is a student body of 4,000. That may not be much in the eyes of a major institution, but these 4,000 students are going to be Canada's next providers of critical thinking, making visual and conceptual contributions. Choosing which art school to attend is a big deal. Can we at least have a minor bit of research on the topic?
Lieske Chabot, Toronto

NOT AGAIN, Maclean's has chosen to ignore the Université du Québec. Why? Are there no public sources of data about this university?
Garry Lindberg, Ottawa



CALL ME BIASED, but Maclean's seems to have an axe with UBC. The biggest article in your cover package even remotely concerning UBC is about corruption and "proven at proms" ("I speak, therefore I am"), yet the university has so much to offer—a few dead clubs, student societies with large responsibilities and budgets, a beautiful campus on a beach, and over 40,000 dedicated students. Yes, UBC has a good residence problem ("Are you being served?"), but let's be honest as a parent would you want your children to be given a free future in the quality of residence food? Your issue, which I dislike, adds information on ways students can be involved on campus—clubs, faculty advisors, volunteer opportunities, jobs. These are the things that an unprepared student looking for a place to

live need for career and postgraduate school. You also need information on application requirements. Faculty like mine employ a broad-based entry program that requires not only high school grades, but a comprehensive breakdown of the student of time in a life. We have put into our curriculum activities, and two short essays. They will only be performed in other faculties and schools as entry grades go higher and higher and schools look to differences in between students.
Adrienne Cleroux, Elections Office 2006-2008, Governor's Undergraduate Society, Stander School of Business, UBC, Vancouver

THE PARENT TRAP

AS A YOUNG WOMAN who chooses not to have children, I would like to thank you for the article on tubal ligation ("Tying the knot," Health, Nov. 12). I have always felt that I had control over my own body, but in the past year I discovered that doctors will usually not perform a tubal ligation unless the woman is over 30 or has had a few children. I was also appalled to read that doctors are telling women that they "just haven't met the right man yet." Romantic notions are value judgments that have no place in the health sector. Not every woman feels that her identity is centered around bearing children. For now, I will continue to pump myself full of synthetic hormones that may or may not be safe, safe or healthy.
Adrienne Lewis, Cassiar, Alta.

UNREST AT BUFFALO POINT

THE FIRST of the story about Chief John Thunder at Buffalo Point First Nation is that Indians are dumb and the white man is a superior and smarter ("Hail Chief Thunder," National, Nov. 26). What Thunder is doing is selling off the people's land for the aim of a few. The Treaty Three agreement, which Buffalo Point is part of, says aside 150 acres for each family of five. The land Thunder leases to the white cottage owners is not his, but the government funds him every year, and if the Indians could reveal, the government would simply send an armed force to put them down.

Canada is allowing settlers to be killed in Afghanistan to protect democracy for other people, but successive Liberal and Conservative governments have refused to honor the right of Buffalo Point people to have an election for their chief and council. In Can-

MAIL BAG



'What Chief John Thunder is doing is selling off the people's land for the benefit of a few'



MAIL BAG

'Benazir Bhutto made a deal with Pervez Musharraf to return to Pakistan, but once she was there she denounced him. If she regains power, we can expect a return to corruption.'

ads, if you are an Indigenous person, the message is clear—the government does not listen to peaceful persons. Small wonder then that [pp. 100-101], Oka, Caldeira and Grassy Narrows are the only real options for indigenous peoples. I know one thing, if I declined myself "chief for life" in Grassy Narrows, my people would shorten my life and quick Chief Terrence Nabeau, Grassy Narrows.

WOMEN IN COMBAT

INSTEAD OF ASKING an academic like Kingsley Browne about women in combat roles, why not ask soldiers (Interview, Nov. 19)? During my time with the Royal Canadian Regiment, I saw first-hand, in Canada and overseas, that women can perform in combat roles just as well as men. Any loss of unit cohesion was more often due to mistreatment over rapid promotion and lower standards for female soldiers, real or perceived, than any lack in the women themselves. Browne forgets that we in Canada have had women in the infantry as combat engineers, and flying fighter jets, for years. As the number of women in combat roles increases, I look forward to Browne trying to explain away Canadian victories.

Retired Cpl. Michael R. Makynay,
Calgary, Ont.

POWER IN PAKISTAN

RECENTLY, the former two-time prime minister of Pakistan, pretends to have shed her old skin of corruption and is now fighting President Pervez Musharraf to bring democracy to the country ("Law and disorder," Good News, Nov. 13). She is reported to have washed away hundreds of millions of dollars in foreign banks, and has avoided, and by self-education to Dubai. Finding Musharraf "irretrievable," she apparently made a deal with him to return to Pakistan. But once there, she began denouncing him. If Bhutto regains power, we can expect the return of corruption. Her god is power, not democracy.

Lachlan Babin, Edmonton

IN A RAE DAZE

ANYONE WHO WANTS to call Bob Rae a "snigger" knows nothing about his legacy after he overtook an Ontario premier ("Here comes the saviour," News, Nov. 13). The province and the country are still struggling to survive his dumb donkey dis-



BROTHERS IN ARMS If Oka needs him, the Grits need a new boss, a reader says, and fast

sions. His arbitrary cutting back on supplies for medical schools has resulted in a low supply of medical practitioners, growing numbers of people with no family doctor and numerous businesses for undertakers. His decision to buy commercial fitting licences on the Great Lakes and hand those closely regulated businesses over to First Nations has resulted in them taking all they want and charging their new owners the regulations everyone else has to abide by. If Stéphane Dion looks to Rae for help, the Liberals need to have an emergency leadership convention.

Mal Lyons, Scarborough, Ont.

THE ROYAL ANNIVERSARY

WHENEVER THERE is some royal event, like the Queen's and Prince Philip's wedding anniversary, you hear Canadians blather to the upside down ("Living happily ever after," News, Nov. 26). If your policy is an endless war, why do you keep giving medals about the royal family? Just leave them alone.

Elizabeth Panikier, Vancouver, Ont.

MY WIFE AND I remember that November morning in 1967 when we rose before dawn to hear the overseas broadcast of the royal wedding from Westminster Abbey. We danced and loved our Queen, and it is right that Mac Iain should recognize the diamond anniversary of her wedding. We are sorry it was with an article so disrespectful of her person and high office.

Rev. Dr. A. Leonard Griffith, Toronto

ONE ANNOYING QUALITY

I stayed up late reading the letter issue because there were so many good stories. This morning I kept thinking about one annoying article written by Barbara Anstee, in which she complained about her U.K. passport and how to carry it around ("Why I'm practicing changing the way that I walk," Opinion, Nov. 19). Your other contributions seem to make an effort to write about the world, but Anstee's column has a quality of distraction that turns the rest of the article.

Philip Kane, Marlborough, Ont.

IN PASSING

Yang Hsiao, 84, politician. Born in Victoria to a tailor's family, he studied engineering and worked on both the Avro Arrow fighter jet program and construction of the COW Line in the 1950s. In 1969, he became the first Chinese Canadian elected to Toronto City Council. He later campaigned for reform for the notorious Chinese head tax.

Ben Smith, 85, politician. Unofficially declaring independence from Britain in 1965, he led an apartheid government in Rhodesia for 16 years, and fought against a guerrilla war waged by black nationalists. In 1979, this resulted in an election that made Robert Mugabe leader of the renamed nation of Zimbabwe.

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A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF OMAR KHADR

While Canada's most famous Qaeda suspect remains locked away at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, his lawyers continue to trumpet the existence of a "secret witness" who could crack the case. The United Nations also jumped on the "Free Khadr" bandwagon, adding Washington over its decision to prosecute a "child soldier." On Sunday, though, the real Omar Khadr finally surfaced: 30 hours after secret footage of the growing 15-year-old playing hard music in Afghanistan.

Good news

Moving on

Home run king Barry Bonds was infused this week for the cure of public opinion long ago considered healed about his on- and off-field antics. Montreal lawyer Dick Posner stepped down as head of the World Free Doping Agency and the Canadian Olympic Committee announced that its resident winners will receive cash bonuses—\$50,000 for gold, \$20,000 for silver, \$10,000 for bronze—finally bringing this country in line with other competing nations. All that's needed is for Lance Armstrong to come clean and we can finally close the books on 2001.

Give peace a chance

It's been a long time coming, but it appears that the six-figure, off-again Middle East peace summit will go ahead in Maryland next week. In a goodwill gesture, Israel is offering more than 400 Palestinian prisoners, and says it will share the experience of West Bank security forces. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is insisting for Arab support, and it seems the Saudis and the Syrians will also be on the table. Expectations should be tempered—the six-day meeting won't yield a deal, but the parties are finally starting to address long-standing roadblocks like the future of Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees, and the need for peace and stability in Gaza. And after seven years of conflict and intolerance, just getting everyone talking is a major accomplishment.

Seeing Rouge

Again, better late than never: Ramer Ringer leader Omar Sanyal was arrested in his Canadian hospital bed this week. Along with other aging officials from his Communist regime, the

76-year-old is charged with crimes against humanity for his role in one of the great mass killings of the last century—the murder of 1.7 million innocent Cambodians. With Sanyal's capture, the long-delayed UN-backed tribunal can finally begin, and the first faceless Khmer Rouge leader will stand trial in ages. One: "It's beyond a dispute," said one human rights advocate.

Cheetah all the time

Seveth Stewens and D'Angelo Brandy were granted court pro-

Bad news

Mountie mayhem

The new just got over for Canada's embattled national police force. This week, the British Columbia government called an investigation into the death of Robert Davidson after he was run over by RCMP Police Officer Wenzel's car. Public anger at the police investigation's pace is running high, with citizens burning Mounties on the streets, and some even egging cruises. And now B.C. is considering the idea of replacing the force on the Lower Mainland. Still, new con-

tinued human investigation has found that both guard and inmate were seriously injured in a car crash after another inmate attack on Nov. 6. Up to two-thirds of the 77 people killed might have perished from gunfire over the burning. Then came the week's most shocking development: Oxfam, a leading British charity, says billions of dollars of Afghan aid money are being squandered as contractors' profits and expatriate consultants.

Touching me...

Four decades after writing the smash hit *Sweet Caroline*, Neil Diamond has finally revealed the inspiration for his song: Caroline Kennedy, the only daughter of John F. Kennedy and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. You can't really blame Diamond for keeping his muse a secret for so long. Kennedy was just 15 years old when he received her photo in a magazine and felt compelled to write "Touching me, touching you." The catchy lyrics just don't seem so innocent anymore: How can it be when holding you? Good times never seem to go bad.

Eternal email

This week's lesson: Be wary of what you type. A new study says half of all employees admit that they have accidentally sent an embarrassing email to the wrong person. Even more humiliating, a Kentucky judge has ordered the state to disclose a series of salacious messages sent between a plaintiff's cheating wife and her co-worker. The Bush administration is a similar legal trouble. Critics are demanding to know what happened to millions of potentially damaging internal emails that are suddenly missing. Let that go, y'all, it's working, she worked in the White House.

One step forward

Canadian soldiers reoccupied Sanyal's prison, the birthplace of the Taliban. If the victory was good news (two prisoners killed in the process) it was the week's low highlight. A suicide bomber targeted a provincial government. The Taliban hanged five Afghan police officers from trees. And a

FACE OF THE WEEK



FOCUS: Caroline Kennedy as Justice Department, 11, shines in the morning cold after force fighting in southern Afghanistan

season from conflict last week. This decision comes amid news that the company's bankruptcy founder and chairman, Frank D'Angelo, was replaced as CEO by the 34-year-old son of the billionaire banker, Barry D'Angelo. It's only a week since the collapse of what, on the surface, appeared to be a genuine business success story. But at least it brings a much-needed end to D'Angelo's reign as CEO. Half-time show—and to his cheering, orange-colored, controversial. Does this mean the Phil Spector will be the Johnnie Walker for pay?



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MITCHEL RAPHAEL ON JUSTIN'S DIAPER DEBATE
AND WHY MPS BETTER WATCH WHAT THEY SAY

STEVEN FLETCHER with Bill McPherson (left) McPherson's book

THE MP WHO'S
TAKING NOTES

Next spring a new book about Winnipeg's Terry MP Steven Fletcher will be published. Written by former Manitoba cabinet minister Linda McMeekin, *What Do You Do? You Don't Do!* will cover Fletcher's journey from "being pigeonholed in edulith in northern Manitoba" to his arrival in Parliament as Canada's first quadriplegic MP. The former engineer became a quadriplegic in 1996, after his car hit a pothole. The 39-year-old MP is nervous about putting his story out there. "It's not like I'm a hero," he admits. "It was during a young lady at the time and I was not even I realized that in the best way relationships change. Everything from how you communicate, to going out to dinner when you can't move, to intimacy and just being able to have kids." Two months ago Fletcher saw his former girlfriend, who is now married, "and she pulled out some letters I wrote her before the accident." They may appear in the book, says Fletcher. "People will see what my old handwriting looked like. Typical engineer handwriting." In the book, Fletcher both attacks and praises the health care sys-

tem. After his accident, he had to wait nine months for an MRI. He also notes swipes at the media, many of whose stories still aren't accessible to him and whose elevated platforms coverage at non-ventures is literally out of his reach. Fletcher says he likes reading political biographies. "What about Brian Mulroney's Memoirs?" "I haven't read it yet. I did buy it. Well, technically it was my dream when I bought it for me. It was 30 per cent off!" Fletcher jokes that signed copies of his book will be for a limited number of people because he will have to "sign with a pen in my mouth."



Also ahead on the literary front is a work by Mike Kozak. The Bill McPherson recently announced he would not seek another federal mandate and was going to run in a by-election for the Third Qualifier. During his time as an MP, the senior decision-maker has been keeping notes on the "100 choices" (in the House), including one: "A favourite activity has been watching second language disasters. During one

by the game interview. So they couldn't change it. Another time as NDP MP (and to say "the GST" but his French pronunciation was so off it sounded like he said "gas from the butt of a deer"). All fodder for Kozak's future book or play—he hasn't decided which from his research will take yet.



TERRY FLETCHER speaks at the National Council of Jewish Women's event

**WHY IS JUSTIN'S
WIFE ALWAYS IN THE
DRIVER'S SEAT?**
Justin Trudeau was the keynote speaker at the 13th Triennial Convention of the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, at which he gave a semi-

pop talk on the campaign trail. He noted that he and his wife, Sophie Grégoire, got rid of their old car and bought one full of safety. "That's why Sophie has a hybrid and Justin has a bike and a bus pass,"

noted Trudeau, who is trying to green his home as much as possible. "We changed our driving products to biodegradable stuff," he told Capital Diary. "A lot of Quebec [friends]. We try to buy local as much as we can, our produce as well." But then along came his baby, Xavier James Trudeau, who was born on Oct. 15. Pierre Elliott Trudeau's birth day. The growing of Xavier is a challenge on some fronts—or rather backroads. "Diapers we are struggling with," says Trudeau. "We really looked into it. It's hard to find an easy alternative." With a diaper changing service, "there are issues with detergent, bleach and phosphanes." And talk there was another kind of hygiene issue. An older woman who met Trudeau gushed, "I'm never going to wash my hand again." ■

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'Thanks for dinner' just doesn't count



BARBARA AMIEL

Ever since a friend gave me the new book of letters between the six Mifflid sisters I have been preoccupied with every 19th-century insight, beside that of Diana, Deborah, Unity, Pamela, Jessica and Nancy, the six famous daughters of the eccentric Lord Mifflid. My own sister is splendid, but neither her work nor mine will ever bring us mental life like the heroes and the 23-year-old Unity Mifflid.

March, 29 September 1815 Darling Ned: I feel now the Father had pain, which I know he sometimes does here. For one thing he didn't stand up when I came to the table which he always does. Also he then around the corners of his eyes was yellow. And then he couldn't seem to keep still, he moved backwards and forwards a whole time, with his hands on his knees, you know how he does. However he was in the most divine mood - as usual. He called a lot about the morning, pretty well, he was terribly pleased at the way it had all gone off. He said he felt terribly free now that it's all over, & that it was so depressing driving away from Nienburg, a few people in the street for almost 100 years.

"Ned" is Diana Mifflid - each sister had multiple nicknames - and she was the son of her blind brother who had Mifflid wound up about Aryan women. Her second marriage in 1816, at the home of Joseph Goebbels with Hitler present, was to Sir Oswald Mosley, the leader of the British Fascist party (God knows, I don't want Nazi and fascist sisters, but there were four others and at least three of them were sisters). Nancy (The Princess of Love and U and was U) was the most adorable sister. She dressed in Dior and lived in Paris, devoted to her married lover - a teenage member of the Resistance and the Gue's chief of staff. Jessica moved to California, joined the Communist party, married an American lawyer branded by McCarthy as one of the most subversive lawyers in the U.S., and wrote non-fiction including *The American Way*.

Great! Deborah married the future duke of Devonshire and stayed Chaworth, their family home, into a first of profitable farm products. Though her published books are on country topics, she writes with Mifflid wit and like an angel, which you have to in order to get me reading about goats. The letters are called from 12,000 that survived the sisters-only "Debo" is slave-ill hand-written except for Jessica's.

No one writes letters now except the bread and butter "Thanks for the wonderful dinner." Even then our modern letter writers rarely follow neatly connecting some remem-



No one now concocts a remembrance that turns a vicious dull evening into heaven

brance that turns a vicious dull evening with sad smiling food into heaven. Even, which has replaced the passionate art, but in own social etiquette, namely to be short and so the point not a moment (some abbreviations). Deborah's passionate letters' email had drawn tied up in pink ribbon.

Letter-writing goes back thousands of years but heated up during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Historically (perhaps now) letters were indicators of status and breeding. Like conversation, they were used to manipulate, embellish, entertain, threaten, seduce and of course do business. On the way home from discovering America, Christopher Columbus got caught in a storm and his mind, named - as a good bourgeois parent - to his two sons. Who would pay their school fees if he came to a victory end? He picked up a quill and documented his accomplishments as the voyage for his Spanish patrons, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, rolled up the letter in a wooden Madeira cask and threw it into the sea. "This was not so much for poverty but rather what University of York professor William F. Sherman

has called "a father's desperate petition for the future support of his children."

The fifth century was among on the age of letters, which made authors' quills especially screaming. Tobias Smollett wrote *Journals Through France* (1767) (see separate letter contains his description of French women: "As their faces are concealed under a false complexion, so their heads are covered with a vast load of false hair, brushed at the forehead, so as exactly to resemble the woolly heads of the Guinea negroes"). His approach to anything foreign was considered so full of spleen by author Laurence Sterne that he was moved to write:

A Sentimental Journey. This satirical novel gives Smollett the name Smollett as a caricature of the author's own exaggerated, who talks of being "they'd slave" by caricature. "To tell it, said Smollett, to the world you had better tell it, said I, to your physician," Samuel Johnson, in referring to his own letters, states: "his soul has raised" but he had doubts about the usefulness of others, writing that there was "no transaction which offers stronger temptations to flattery and sycoph-

antic than epistolary intercourse." How to books abounded. Letters, apart from business or state, were seen as a formal task, and sometimes addressed to specific people. The *New Academy of Compliments*, for example, published in 1671, added the letter so be written by abandoned women "A credit's Virgin to her doubtful friend." Hand-writing in the mood "Now you appear to feel, that nothing can be more necessary, is the fear of your Providence and Vice... how comes it then to pass, that you flatter me, raise my Reputation, and leave me to become the Map of Shame and Ignominy..." "Hill to see the Map of Shame but I suspect it was so as he liked them in holding horses is now.

A Vanderbilt University study of children taught cursive writing from and experienced themselves better. If so, I have a few suggestions for our educators: How about letters? "On Remembering a Prince of Darkness" without incurring Hare Chugan? or "An Ailing Chinese to his Mother's Mother of Health." The possibilities are, sadly, limitless. ■

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FIRST ELECTED IN 1976, he served through the Trudeau, Mulroney, Chretien and Harper eras, and led an impact from opposition benches

★ PARLIAMENTARIAN OF THE YEAR ★

BILL BLAIKIE IS CANADA'S BEST MP

After 28 years in Ottawa, he defines the spirit of genuine public service

BY JOHN GEDDES • Bill Blaikie is such a huge man that it's strange to think of him as a micronesian of anything. Yet after nearly three decades in politics, this single MP embodies the essential frustration, and occasional small-scale triumphs, of the NDP in particular, and all-school gay-activism in general. He's been in the House of Commons since 1979, though

he has never tasted real power in all those years, as his party has had to settle for influence policy instead of firm government. He's emerged as a House icon, but as an example of what Parliament might be, while many MP's define what it more often is. "Parliament has been ugly before," Blaikie says. "But people have never been so consistently rude to each other as they are now."

Still, the veteran of the second annual Mulroney Parliament of the Year (which could never be written off as the sort who merely avoids from the sidelines) He's been in the thick of things, playing a role in shaping laws like Ontario's the Canada Health Act and the

Clarity Act. Non-deputy speaker of the House, he brings unquestioned credibility to the job of keeping order and setting a civil tone. Just even during the merry years when he was a front-bench NDP MP, he had the rare ability to quiet the House when he rose to his imposing six-foot-six height to ask a question in his rambling baritone. "He was an MP's to listen," says veteran Liberal MP Derek Lee. "He had a way of according respect while clearing an answer."

By being back the last among them, he gets recognized both what he's done and what he intends to do they should be doing. And he's not just a discourse of old man

"When he has something to say, it's important to listen," says former R.C. MP Peggy Priddy. "He has no need to hear his own voice all the time." Roughly half of the MP's in the House, 151 out of 308, participated in the survey organized for Maclean's by Ipsos-Reid. (They voted to see everyone overall, including best answer, most knowledgeable, and best at representing constituents.) In picking Blaikie as Parliamentarian of the Year, they acknowledged one thing he has answered he will not run in the next election, and has accepted a position teaching politics and theology at the University of Winnipeg.

It's hard to imagine, however, that he will ever truly leave the political game behind. Blaikie grew up in a small town in Ontario, a railway town when he was a boy, now absorbed into Winnipeg. He remembers watching John F. Kennedy debate Richard Nixon on TV in 1960. "There probably weren't that many nine-year-olds watching," he says. "I was something of a political geek." Further evidence, when he was just 12, Blaikie made a habit of attending town council meetings. "I liked to watch the arguing," he says. "I'm still doing that—no growth there at all."

Along with Blaikie's political awakening came spiritual growth that built on his church-going upbringing in Toronto. After graduation, he decided to study theology at the University of Toronto's Emmanuel College. In three years there he explored two powerful currents linking Christian teaching and

degree. But early on, another instinct took hold. "I decided to be more of a critic, if you like, to oppose to somebody who is uncritical of the prevailing paradigm and does not within it," he persisted in philosophy and religious studies. In 1971, as he watched TV coverage of the NDP leadership convention won by David Lewis, he thought, "These guys are saying what I believe." He soon joined the party. In 1975, he graduated from U of T and moved to Toronto, a schoolteacher, that same year. They went on to have four children: Deborah, David, Jonathan, and two more who will be known as NDPers. Rebecca is the party's top organizer in Montreal, and David, who works as an aide in Montreal's NDP government.

When Stephen Harper, seemed to Ignatieff a right, struggle to translate his complex thoughts into meaningful language, the Harvard intellectual has obviously studied this craft well.

"Ignatieff has to learn to speak articulately without appearing verbose," he remembers at his informal Alpha politics in the New York Times. "In public life, language is a weapon of war and is deployed in conditions of radical distrust." There, as a couple sessions, seems to be his guiding principle. He is a willing person, but without seeming too vulnerable (like, say, Dean) or even understanding (like, say, the Prime Minister).



BLAIKIE is a powerful orator, but learns the decorum of civility in the House of Commons.

Succumbed by such stuff, Ignatieff seemed nearly poetic. "Mr. Speaker, you can't get development, diplomacy and defence to work together in Kandahar if you're not truthful, straightforward and transparent," he said. "This isn't a war zone and it's not in Afghanistan, if all they are in troops, tanks and guns."

He spoke of with and made a speech. And then, however, he questioned down upon the government. "So when is the Prime Minister going to get involved in this case, his minister of defence, and give some real coordination between diplomacy, defence and development?"

The afternoon, the careful use of oppositional language by parliament's standards, that was profound. Anne Wilby



With a slight hands, he has also mastered a sort of oratorical move. He brings his hands together and claps them together when making a point. Chaps the ear to right or left to depict shows. When his eyes to fight about.

Good, it is not difficult to learn a man and the very noble of Question Period (the other day, the Conservative benches took to raising themselves with raised voices), but Ignatieff has proven over the last year to be a rather dramatic presence. When Stephen Harper, seemed to Ignatieff a right, struggle to translate his complex thoughts into meaningful language, the Harvard intellectual has obviously studied this craft well.

Even though first Joe Conradi, the NDP MP for Ontario's Windsor-Essex riding, would like to believe he's a good politician, that ordinarily he doesn't like getting awards. But in this case, he admits that being named the most knowledgeable MP by a jury after participating in a forum is flattering, although he's really not too low on awards. It's the one thing, he's enjoyed a high profile in NDP circles both public and private, covering everything from the tribulations of the RCMP and the debate over nuclear reactors, to the pro-life and order bills that are the political bread and butter for the Tory government. "People say no, why are you in the news so much? And I just keep placing that the Conservatives are financial, and so obsessed with crime bills, that it keeps coming up."

Widdows isn't what you'd call a Conradi agent, however, it's his breadth of knowledge and grasp of the issues. "When I first graduated from law school," he recalls, "one of my professors told me that you need to build a support base within the community, within the discipline of whatever I was practicing." He took her advice, and built a network of experts—other lawyers, a chemist, a physicist—he could call on for background information and advice. "I've had to identify the experts in their respective areas and build a close working relationship with them," says Conradi, who was a friendly, cerebral and personal inquiry lawyer before winning election in this house in 1996. "It's not possible to do all the research and the reading yourself, and as I've done the same thing up here in Ottawa."

To that end, he says, he relies "to a significant degree" on non-governmental organizations, advocates and activists, as well as the legal community. But he also does as much research on his own as possible. And, not surprisingly, he finds that there just isn't enough hours in the day. "I do read some news on my laptop," he says, "but when I go to bed, one thing I always suggest is that I had to sleep for the last few years. I wanted to try to get to Ottawa, but couldn't by then from Windsor," and that it could only read about half as much as I wanted." In his lawyer days, he says, he was always concerned about being prepared for the courtroom. He finds the same today about the Commons, not that he will agree to think he has much to worry about. Katy O'Malley



Church in 1978, he tried to speed the wind to more progress on parts of "Windup." "I went out to the churches around the city and said, 'This is what's happening within your own city. If you want to help us, you have to change the political circumstances within which we work.'"

He spent his two years serving in the North End before answering the call of federal politics. His upward trajectory over a Tory incumbent sent the young man to Ottawa. The first few years there would be his most agitating. The brief Joe Clark Tory minority government of 1979 was followed by Pierre Trudeau's return to power in 1980. The Liberal majority temporarily held all the conservative cards then emerging in English-speaking world, as Kenneth Deegan and Margaret Thatcher put their stamp on the era. In Canada, though, it wasn't a bad time to be a muckie left wing MP. In Ottawa, activist government was still in, as Trudeau created his Minister of Health and Families, expanded the National Energy Program, and strengthened medicine.

It was to be the last period when Blakie felt like his brand of activist politics was on the march. "He didn't feel like you were living in a context in which things that had been accomplished were being undone." As NDP health critic, he spent three years pushing for new rules that would largely stop doctors from charging their patients for care covered by health insurance. "It was the big battle," he says, "winning a system in which provinces would be penalized if they allowed controlling and over-fee for medically necessary services." Indeed, the Liberal health minister of the time, Maurice Rignault, credits Blakie for his success in his part in shaping the now-succinct Canada Health Act of 1984. Later that year, Irons McCreery's Conservatives swept to power, and chances for Blakie to make a mark grew near. To Blakie, the first real debate in 1985 was the issue of debate. The old idea mulling among NDP elites, Liberal's various crises, and shades of Progressive Conservatives, was replaced

THE RESPECT of his place in was reflected in Blakie's selection as deputy speaker

by a decision of ideology of free trade, free markets, and government divestment.

Suddenly, the NDP seemed to many to be caught in a time warp. "Between 1984 and 1985, it began to feel like we were fighting this sort of rear-guard action," Blakie says. "Instead of going from industrialism to income redistribution of power, instead of focusing on the environment and Aboriginal people, we were forced to fight for things that were already there. This really hurt us. We started to be effectively portrayed as people who were captive to the past."

By the 1990s, much of the energy on the left had been siphoned away from the NDP into the anti-globalization and environmental movements. The left proudly branding its card at the dinner in Seattle and across other cities weren't interested in the basic social issues and leadership on doctors as well. Blakie remembers talking to a young professor at the Quebec City free trade summit in 2001. He gestured up to the windows of the leaning Château Frontenac hotel, and

AT AGE 12, HE'D GO TO TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS. 'I LIKED TO WATCH THE ARGUING.'



PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDY TAYLOR FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL



★ A FEW QUESTIONS FOR BILL ★

Small talk isn't necessarily part of the oversized Bill Blakie package. But our Parliamentarian of the Year offered quick and revealing answers to the following:

What's the person you were most thrilled to meet in political life? Tommy Douglas. One of the great leaders of my life is that Tommy Douglas left instructions that he wanted me to affiliate at his funeral.

Who would you still like to meet most? An American president. Ultimately, everything comes around our relationship with the United States. To have the chance to actually engage a president in a way that would be interesting.

What's the biggest difference between Ottawa and Winnipeg? Winnipeg is much more conscious of Ottawa than Ottawa is of Winnipeg.

What book are you reading just now? There are three or four. Richard Poirer's memoir *A Glowing Dream* about Ontario politics, Charles Taylor's novel *A Singular Age*, and Bruce Maloney's memoir—I'm enjoying that.

What's your favorite movie? From my formative years, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, for its message about how the dominant view of things can appear people. Recently, *Amazing Grace*, a powerful movie about William Wilberforce's struggle to end the slave trade.

How tall are you? Six foot six.
And how much do you weigh? I don't know, 185, 190 lb.

Is being big an advantage in politics? Lots of successful politicians are little guys. I was surprised when I lost our own Pierre Trudeau.

What's your advice to the MP who succeeds you in Elmwood Transcona? They don't let you so you can be in every event in the riding. They expect you to go to bed. This is where you finish in.

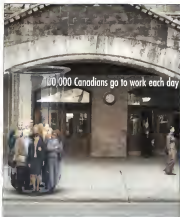
What do you hope to have more time for when you leave politics? Canoeing. Nothing grand—there are trips northwest of Kenora. I've had the canoe out and looked at the stars at night.

ON THE WEB: For more on the winners visit www.canadapoint.com/vote07/poyr

and the political and business leaders meeting behind them weren't treated by name in the streets. "As long as you're not willing to do that unexciting, gladdening work of the moral police," Blakie's lecture goes, "the global, corporate guys have you right where they want you."

But Blakie's prime goal had to be a revitalization of the former political hopes of the Canadian left would surely be thwarted. The news bar from Elmwood-Transcona was a leading contender in the NDP's 2007 leadership race, commanding the support of almost the party's MPs. This backing, however, turned out to be almost liability. After a demoralizing campaign election results under Audrey McLaughlin and then Alexa McDonough through the minutes, the party decided to change Transcona municipal politician Jack Layton's name. "Irene shows," Blakie reflects, "like we needed somebody who was more a politician than a professional."

In a sense, Blakie took a step back from the party as a signal to focus on Parliament itself. Layton made him the NDP's House leader, a job that requires close work with the other parties in its strategic parliamentary business. After last year's Conservative election victory, Blakie was named deputy speaker, a job that requires him to pull back from most partisan



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Source: Pharmaceutical Research Board of Canada (2006-2007)
September 2007

PUTTING A LID ON IT

BY JOHN HORTON • The fact that Canadian kids aren't required by law to wear helmets when tobogganing is enough to make you wonder if Tim Hortons' new holiday emblem—emblazoned with an illustration of tobogganers wearing big smiles and helmets—is some kind of political statement.

It's not, says Rachel Douglas, a spokesperson with the coffee chain. This year's cup design—available until about New Year's—was chosen because it fits the company's long-standing commitment to children's safety, she says. Helmet, after all, are mandatory when tobogganing at one of the six kids' camps run by the Tim Hortons Children's Foundation.

Wearing protective head gear before stepping—first time in many cases—down the slopes is the rest of the country isn't. And that is the concern something of a political issue. Medical experts agree on what are calling on the government to legislate mandatory helmet legislation for tobogganing—says it's taking a bit. Since 2003, at least seven people have been killed in toboggan-related accidents in Canada, including two children last January: an eight-year-old girl was killed after being a tree near Maclean's, and a 12-year-old boy from Cobham, Ont., died after working his head over his father's when wearing a helmet. Those accidents were rushed to emergency rooms every winter. In fact, every year in Ontario alone, about 1,700 people head to the OR after a sled accident. About 100 are hospitalized. Broken limbs are the most common injuries after a crash. Head injuries account for about a third of all visits to emergency, says Philip Groll with Senior Policy, a Toronto-based not-for-profit group focused on injury prevention. Groll supports helmet use when tobogganing, but is concerned that it could create a sense of security. "What we'd have to watch for," he says, "is for kids doing helmet legislation to get passed, for parents to rush out to buy helmets for their kids, slip them on their heads and throw them out the door thinking all is well and done."

For now, at least, the only place there seems to be a serious push for a mandatory law is in

Vaughan, Ont. That's where Councillor Sandra Liang-Rosen, moved by her sister's tragedy, is working on making Vaughan known for something more than just being the city above Toronto. "Twenty years ago, winter weather patterns were totally different," says Liang-Rosen. "Now, one day it can snow, the next day could be freezing rain. You never know what's under the snow." Adding to the danger, she says, is an increasing need for speed among enthusiasts. (Some tobogganers can reach speeds of 35 km/h.)

Strong Katoa hope to have a helmet by a proposal covering snowboarding, skating, shore boarding and tobogganing up for debate in council in March. Getting a passed, however, will be tough. Police officers often shy away from legislating acrossroads considered to be good old-fashioned fun for a large segment of the population. And then there are the concerns about enforcement. After all, how much manpower can a city police force afford to have on sled patrol?

Still, the fact this is an issue at all is a major shift from just a few years ago. Before the Bank of Canada released its 2002-2003, a focus group of Canadians told it that while helmets made sense on the hockey players in the Olympics, the child riding on a sled didn't need anything more than a toque. At the time, the little Canada was also considered, says Bank of

Canada spokesperson Christina Verma, but didn't express any safety concerns with the proposed design. (Helmets Canada, at least now anyway, recommends wearing a helmet when tobogganing.) "I've had received such a recommendation, we would have put a helmet on the girl's head," says Verma, who claims that the bank hasn't received a single complaint about the illustration since the note was first released five years ago.

Back then, even Tim Hortons seemed a little less concerned about safety—at least when it came to snowmen. On their holiday season cup about five years ago, Frosty and friends were shown playing hockey without helmets. "They're more worried about the sun," jokes Douglas. ■

Whitehorse's taxi wars take an ugly turn



WHITEHORSE cabbies like Carl Bowen see competition as fierce

BY KATE LORING • There's a taxi war under way in the city of Whitehorse. The number of licensed taxis has doubled over the past 10 years. There are roughly 12,000 people, the Yukon capital is now served by a whopping 30 companies (justly named Corner Brook, Nfld., goes by with five). And drivers say the fight for fares has gotten downright underhanded.

"The competition is fierce," says Yusuf Abdi, a driver for Klondike Taxi. Cabbies are increasingly poaching one another's customers, he complains—"sometimes have someone [go] back to where other drivers are going," then race to pick up the customer first. Grumpy Bear Taxi owner Don (who declines to give his last name) has noticed it too. "It's really cutthroat," he says. Abdi's Michael O'Brien, owner of the recently opened United Taxi, "There are too many taxis. It's very hard to get customers."

Bad for the people of Whitehorse that may be a good thing. The city's cab sector is notorious for being at best unreliable, and at worst a nightmare. Clients who have long been a problem, as most cabbies acknowledge. All too often, "the driver's drugged, the car's dirty," O'Brien says. Vehicles are so dilapidated many older cars would struggle just to go uphill, claims Ken Goss, owner of The Bear Cab. Worst of all, some taxis are used as mobile drug and prostitution dens, says Whitehorse Centre MLA Todd Hardy. "The accountability, at a business level, [hasn't] been there," he says.

Don't service at Whitehorse "is an open market—if you feel you can make a go of it, you can come on in," says byline services manager John Taylor, adding that the city's looking at toughening up its regulations. Finally, for one hopes Whitehorse gets serious with its no-alcohol taxi law. As one driver said in the local news: "There are some scumbags driving cabs who I wouldn't even want my dog driving with." ■

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PAKISTAN'S LAST GREAT HOPE

Bhutto vows to bring democracy and stop radicalism. Can she do it? BY MICHAEL PETROU

Their August, following months of terrorist bombings and rising violence between Pakistan's state-sourc

in the U.S., a virtual shadow State Department, and addressing the body was her last chance to reach American decision-makers. Still beautiful at 54, wearing a white scarf loosely draped over the back of her head and

and she cited a U.S. intelligence report that claimed that al-Qaeda and the Taliban were both well-armed in Pakistan's safe havens. In a city that had suffered the trauma of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks at the hands of al-Qaeda, and in a country that has suffered the deaths of more than 450 of its soldiers in the fight against the Taliban in Afghanistan, her words were well-received. "It is often surprising to those of us in Pakistan who see the international community look the wrong way," she said. "But this back-

dispersed following the events of 9/11." But Bhutto offered her radical solution. "Ladies and gentlemen, I plan to run here this year to Pakistan to lead a democratic movement for the restoration of democracy," she said. "I seek to lead a moderate Pakistan which is free from the yoke of military dictatorship and which will cease to be a slave, the very petri dish of international terrorism. A democratic Pakistan that would bring stability to Afghanistan. A democratic Pakistan that would bust up the drug cartel that today is funding terrorism. A Pakistan where the rule of law is established so that no one has the permission to arbitrarily remove, arrest and imprison anyone without a warrant. A democratic Pakistan that puts the welfare of its people as the centerpiece of its national policy."

Bhutto has made good on at least one

in millions who control tens of thousands in its Tribal Area and are courting their reach into cities. The military, which essentially runs the country, has been unstable and, at times, unwilling to defend the insurgency, and has never much liked Bhutto. And while she is popular, Bhutto draws more of her support from the province of Sindh, far from Pakistan's turbulent frontier with Afghanistan. Now the most serious gain the loyalty of the army and intelligence services, and the support of the people, for an increased struggle against terrorism: that, so far, has not been successful. It's a formidable challenge.

Benazir Bhutto was born into a political dynasty. Her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was prime minister of Pakistan in the 1970s, before he was deposed by a military coup in 1977

coming back as a symbol of the hope for transformation in Pakistan." Bhutto was elected PM in 1988 and quickly ran into opposition from the army and intelligence services, which kept their control over much of the country, especially seen pursuing foreign policy and security. Zulfikar, the author of a recent book on Pakistan's struggle with militant Islam, describes her election as "a invasion from direct to indirect military rule." Many generals made it a point not to shake her. Within two years, president Ghulam Ishaq Khan dismissed her on charges of corruption and misuse.

Bhutto was re-elected in 1993. During her second term, the Taliban emerged as forces in neighboring war-torn Afghanistan. Although the Pakistan People's Party that Bhutto led is a left-leaning party that opposes religio-



prison. Following a U.S.-backed deal with Musharraf that dropped long-standing corruption charges against her, she ended her exile and flew home to prepare for upcoming parliamentary elections. Then on August 18, 2001, terrorist attacks at the hands of al-Qaeda, and in a country that has suffered the deaths of more than 450 of its soldiers in the fight against the Taliban in Afghanistan, her words were well-received. "It is often surprising to those of us in Pakistan who see the international community look the wrong way," she said. "But this back-

Even her enemies must concede that Benazir Bhutto is a courageous woman. She is also calculating, headstrong and, in two previous incarnations, ran a particularly good government, with a reputation for corruption that she's never been able to shake. In short, she's hardly an obvious candidate to lead a nation and country of 150 million people away from the brink of disaster. But this is the task she's taken on.

Bhutto returned to Pakistan in 1986. Glamorous, young, articulate, she drew enormous crowds. "She called hope for the future, a new kind of politics," says Jan Talbot, a professor of history at the University of Southampton and the author of several books on Pakistan. She spokebacked a break with the military, which, Talbot adds, "had been in power for so many years after her father's overthrow and had presided over a steady black period in terms of human rights, civil society, economic opportunities. She was

measured. Bhutto was not too far from the Taliban as a means to secure trade routes across north Afghanistan. She was always about to run for the army and intelligence agencies, and agreed to their request for cover and to the Taliban. "It started out with a little bait, then it became addiction. Then it became money," she said in 2002. "I don't know how much money they were ultimately given. I know was a lot." In meetings with U.S. officials, Bhutto and her aides denied that Pakistan was funding and arming the Taliban. Bhutto's attempts at reconciliation with the military and intelligence agencies didn't even her in the end. In 1996, the army and a new president, Pervez Musharraf, dismissed her from office, again because of alleged corruption. Domestically, Talbot says, her government had "pioneered much and delivered very little." Three people who remained her greatest supporters, remained poor: Justice Asif Ali Zardari, a prominent politician under Bhutto, his performance as "unsatisfactory in several respects." Bhutto and her supporters point out that she was never allowed to return in

office for the length of time that she was elected to govern, and this is true. But her prominence as a candidate on a national level for her failures has not helped.

Seeking to escape corruption charges, Bhutto returned again to London, the home of so many rebel politicians and revolutionaries, and then moved to Dubai. She remained active in Pakistan politics from abroad. She is, after all, the Pakistan People's Party's "first lady," and her party maintained a monopoly of national news. It is apparent that Bhutto's personal popularity continued to grow. In an interview, the Pakistani Prime Minister, Yousaf Raza Gilani, said that Bhutto's return to Pakistan, described her during her exile as "a wandering daughter in an upland Greek myth of greed and family tragedy."

losing her run the whole there?"

"This may well be true, but realists with Musharraf cannot ignore the fact that she would be deemed as a villain by other opposition leaders and not having support. If Bhutto is sincere—and she is—she will already be celebrating an understanding with Gen. Ashraf Khan, Musharraf's most likely successor as head of the military. Syed was once Bhutto's military secretary and was involved in negotiating her deal with Musharraf. A functional relationship between the two is possible.

In the meantime, Bhutto must decide whether to pursue a pragmatic military alliance, which could be for her. She and other opposition leaders have threatened to boycott the contest if Musharraf doesn't restore the constitution and end Pakistan's state of

anarchy. Either way, Bhutto may again take on a political leadership position in Pakistan. If this happens, she will finally have a chance to prove to her detractors about confidence in her. She may also threaten the world—winning a battle between dictatorship and democracy, corruption and modernism—amounts to more than empty promises.

Bhutto's supporters, particularly, are optimistic. Her party has 1,500 members. Karan Singh, among them. Bhutto's Deputy, Seerat Khan, the party's ad hoc commander in Canada, who emigrated from Pakistan seven years ago. He believes that a Bhutto government would have the legitimacy necessary to prosecute difficult war against Islamic extremists. "General Musharraf does not enjoy the popular support of the people," he says. "With

strong criticism of Islamic extremism, but without a consistent theme of Bhutto's, over and over. She sounds like a woman who is the danger of Islamic extremism leaving apart the country. One has to say this is not just opposition. She really seems to believe it."

She also believes that Bhutto can control Pakistan's war on terrorism. "More and more Pakistanis are really alarmed," he says. "I know that they have been reluctant to vote recently because it's as if they're taking over a united front of the country. Pakistan is a policy of supporting Islamic extremists as long as they are directed outside the country, but now the extremists have come home to meet. And I think people will support Bhutto more as she really tries to rally the country against what is plainly a menace to the country."

SHE WAS A WEAK PM, APPROVING COVERT AID TO THE TALIBAN



THE COVERT-EDUCATED Bhutto was a symbol of a new politics in the 1990s—a break from the military. She still draws big crowds today.

Today, the wandering daughter Bhutto has earned divided adoration from her core rebel political ally. She returned to work with Musharraf in a "transition to democracy" that would see the two agree to share power. The U.S. pushed for the deal, still seeing Musharraf's support in the war on terror, and Bhutto would provide his dictatorship with a democratic glass. But when Musharraf declared emergency rule, Bhutto's co-operation with her turned into a political liability. She denounced the dictator and declared that working with him was impossible.

"This is all talk," says Nigam Sethi, editor in chief of the Daily Times and the Friday Times in Pakistan, who has known Bhutto since the 1970s. "Each one needs the other. For Musharraf, if Benazir doesn't participate in the election, they will lose all legitimacy. As far as Benazir is concerned, the Pakistanis aren't interested in terms of being a good ruler or in terms of their interests. They think she's too busy trying to win and go American, almost like an American agent. So they're not happy

emerging. A boy who would despite Musharraf's crisis of legitimacy, leading to unrest and possibly the end of his government.

But, contesting an election, even under favored conditions, opens the door for Bhutto to reverse political leadership. "She will represent the only politician with the kind of street cred to pose a challenge to Musharraf," says Farooq Bhutto, an associate fellow at the London think tank Chatham House. "She does street politics better than any other politician." At the moment, Bhutto is the most popular civilian leader in the country, and her party would do well in a run and fair vote.

Officially, Bhutto is barred from serving a third term as PM because of a rule brought in by Musharraf that forbids anyone from becoming prime minister or president more than twice—which he admits was poorly designed to block Bhutto from becoming prime minister again. The rule can be changed, however. Bhutto also has the option of continuing to lead her party and discuss its policies, while another member of the political

party popular support never can be won. The army cannot win the war on terror. The army has been used from the people. Let the Pakistan people voice that war. Let the parties mobilize their workers. We Pakistanis are facing the most crucial situation in our history. Let's fight these terrorists and eliminate them. And people will eliminate them."

Danaj's brother, who has been with the Taliban, gives the apparent strength of Islamic extremists in Pakistan, but in fact their support is limited. The Musharraf May 10-Ahmad, a coalition of religious parties that includes hard-core Islamists, is powerful in Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province, but pulled out in support of Benazir 10 and 12 years ago.

Bhutto has also won over more neutral observers and analysts. "There is no question that she is extremely wise to confront Islamic extremism as a woman and a leader," says David S. Gelles, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, told Musharraf. "Bhutto's return to the country was really very little space for

terrorism." And, Sethi points out, "She's not a democratic political elite figure who can command respect in the Islamic world. She really speaks the language of the people. To think that she has the potential for her to go to Pakistan behind her agenda."

Others are more skeptical. Bhutto's actions with the military make a potential threat, and it is the army that will be on the front lines of a showdown with Islamic extremists that is already increasingly violent and bloody. "In the end of the day, the country is controlled by the military," says Imad Gilleman, a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. "Would Bhutto control the army? I doubt it. She didn't before when she was prime minister. I doubt she would now."

What disarms? "It's assumed that Musharraf would support her," says Sethi. "But the army is not a military people who are completely fed up with Musharraf and think he's been a disaster on many fronts." Sethi also notes that Bhutto's return to the country was really very little space for

to return to Pakistan, an even more difficult by Pakistan's military. "Given the alternative, if power is going to pass to a civilian, democratic electoral rule, the military would probably prefer Bhutto to Nawaz Sharif."

Nigam Sethi, the Pakistani newspaper editor, believes Musharraf may still have a role to play as a bridge between Bhutto's army and the civilian leadership. "If Benazir is going to do it without Musharraf, the army will be the army won't listen to what she says," Sethi says. "It will resist to the last inch and inch, or it will try to understand, and the whole effort of the war on terrorism could be wasted." That, of course, is similar to the argument Musharraf has implicitly made over since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks against the U.S. I might be a devotee, but my army and my opinion are necessary for you to succeed in your fight against terrorism. But in the process Musharraf publicly threw his support behind the American war on terror, the Taliban has found refuge in Pakistan, and is now spreading its reach beyond the country's borders to the Indian subcontinent.

Moreover, the U.S. has increased support for Musharraf's unapproved American efforts to pay for and in a global advance for free does and liberalization. "We play a role in propagating beliefs of our enemies by backing dictators, while at the same time supporting the forces of democracy," says Bruce Hoffman, a professor of security studies at Georgetown University. "America's standing is already really low in the world. This position has added more damage to the answer to the problems of the Middle East and South Asia, and now we risk repeating our principles."

This is in fact a move to end Bhutto's efforts to bring civilian rule back to Pakistan. Bhutto is a symbol of democracy in a country like Bhutto, where the remnants of doing so are positive or inconsequential. Supporting democracy in Pakistan is only Pakistan's current government has a few more steps to go. But backing democracy in Pakistan is still the right thing to do. And for all the talk of a civilian rule, the dangers of dictatorship are inevitably worse. "There are no reasons of Pakistan—not any politician on his or her side, nor general on his or her side," says Sethi. "This is a very serious situation and an option. It is not a question of democracy. It's a question of the vote will bring about a new government."

Bhutto's return is not the answer to all of Pakistan's problems. Her record as office is spotty at best. And the challenges she faces are enormous. But Bhutto is also a woman who is brave, a liberal, a genuine ally of the West, and most important of all, a devoted. She may not be the country. But right now, she could be as best as hope.

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of stopping in Warsaw on her way to Meikow—and once there of meeting representatives of the pro-democracy Memorial organization between sessions with Putin. Her willingness to open the Chinese Embassy in Beijing comes straight from her own youth in Communist East Germany. It has cost her numerous many cancelled meetings with the Beijing regime, but Kalla loves it at home. "Germans have had, for 40 or 50 years, 80

ALTHOUGH DIPLOMATIC, she is not afraid to be confrontational, as she has been with Putin and Bush. Putin, at home love it



"GERMANS ARE NOT SURE HOW TO BE PROUD WITHOUT INVADING ANOTHER COUNTRY"



was a difficulty feeling proud," the Merkel side said in the chancellery building. "They're not sure how to be proud without invading another country. Before, if you were proud about being German, you went into France." Merkel gives Germans the navel feeling that they might dare to measure themselves at their right voice—neither too bold nor too timid, but like Caligula's parades, just right. "People don't think it's bad if the optics of Putin," she said too. "Especially in the east

If Mr. Putin looks cross, Frau Merkel stays calm and something that made sense." Despite her willingness to be a good girl in some carefully selected bits, Merkel's diplomatic success makes sure in her ability to reduce the tension in a meeting with, not much later, Poland's Kaczyński won't. Lech remains president. Jarosław's party was defeated last month in parliamentary elections—spent two years taking ancient issues

from the war years to seem easy political home. Merkel, whose success makes her the most powerful character in her country's history, responded by doing a slow burn and for building her own officials from responding in any way except cheerful optimism to the Kaczyński's intent. The reward for their patience was the re-election of a more pro-European Polish government under Donald Tusk.

None of her diplomatic success will mean, of course, if Merkel from any Germany's economic success at home. Most observers in Germany say that simply isn't it. On largely symbolic fronts—a few more months of unemployment benefits for the elderly here or there—she gives a little, at a time when new record employment growth and a world being expert sector offer her room to give. On fundamental she is more just. Only three years ago, Germany had a punishingly high business tax that encouraged a grey market of offshore business plan shell games. Merkel cut business taxes sharply, which gave more businesses an incentive to stay in the country and actually pay their taxes. She won't still that reform back. The departure of Muensterling proved this, while Merkel's bottom line is lower than business driven in newspapers outside Germany might like, she does have one.

She came from nowhere and beat the machine house. She has surprised Germany's neighbours and survived the first major crisis in her coalition. German politics is exactly designed to ensure her job will never be easy. But Frau Merkel is not doing demonstrating that she is nobody's Mother. ■

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GERMANY: THE UNWANTED PATTERN OF LITTLE FEET After a century of invasions, residents of Oberschicht have decided to raise a wall around their Bavarian village. The invaders are members of Mississippi's oil industry, who spend the time by the thousands each autumn. "You couldn't take a step without crushing a dove underfoot. The smell was disgusting," says one resident. Zoologists have recommended building a 30-cm-high metal wall with an overhanging lip to thwart the attacks.



THE NEW FACE OF ONLINE GAMBLING



Alwyn Morris wants to build a new future in Kahnawake. Even if it means starting a fight.

BY MARTIN PATRIQUIN

ALWYN MORRIS moves about with the kind of easy self-purpose that compels people, friends and strangers alike to at least nod hello. Twenty-three years has passed since he won gold and bronze medals for Canada in bobsledding at the 1984 Summer Olympics. He's received the Order of Canada and been freed by prime ministers for his work on behalf of troubled native youth. And in the Kahnawake reserve, not far from downtown Montreal, he is regarded as a local success story with legends as unofficial ambassadors whose accomplishments are enduring points of pride. But if Morris has his way, his greatest con-

tribution to this place is yet to come, and it will be in a business that Ottawa considers potentially illegal.

After close to two decades serving in various government jobs, the 30-year-old has decided to wade into the heart of a billion-dollar legal standoff. Kahnawake is already home to Mohawk Internet Technologies, better known to those in law enforcement as the technological hub of more than half of the world's Internet gambling traffic. Now the ex-Olympian has started a company—Morris Mohawk Gaming Group—that promises to solidify Kahnawake's status as the online gaming capital of North America. "I'm in as the hammer across world for the better part of 17 years. I was looking for an opportunity to be challenged a little differently," he says. "When the river is flat, you have to strike."

Dressed in his usual business-casual dark blue blazer, he finds the Kahnawake band-

Morris has won Olympic gold, and now he wants to be a gaming kingpin.

council building, where he accepts a small office, and immediately into the details of his newest venture. If all goes according to plan, Morris will soon run the North American operations of Bongo, one of the largest and most notorious gambling sites on the Internet. Started by Calvin Ayre, the Israeli bookmaker who self-proclaimed himself a "lifestyle brand" whose gambling sites processed about US\$7 billion in wagers last year alone. Through his company, Ayre will give Bongo an undisclosed sum for the right to handle customer service, media relations, and Internet traffic, along with millions of dollars in bets, for Bongo's North American operations.

Should it succeed, there will be a very rich man beyond the money. However, the Bongo website could

ruin Morris a major player in a billion-dollar industry whose operations are located in an abandoned bed factory 30 km from downtown Montreal. Roughly 60 per cent of the world's online gambling now flows through the servers of MGT, a company wholly owned and operated by the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake. And all that traffic holds the promise of a strong, self-reliant and independent Mohawk nation within Canada's borders—a dream countless reserve leaders have failed to realize.

Trouble is, the U.S. government has declared online gambling illegal, Ayre himself would likely be thrown in jail should he ever leave his compound in Oregon to sit out in America. Ottawa and Quebec say that Internet and Kahnawake are doing it illegal. "What's our role as a sovereign nation in Canada like this will, or the ability to stop what's going on in Kahnawake. So, for now, the online gold mine continues to grow.

KAHNAWAKE'S LONG TRICKLE toward self-sufficiency has had more than its share of ups and downs during the past year. For its senior grand chief Joe Norton, the longest serving leader in the history of this reserve of roughly 8,000, devoted social economic development schemes during his tenure. Norton was the main proponent for the opening of a casino in Kahnawake, though the community rejected the idea in two separate referendums. There was talk of establishing a tax-free business zone on the reserve, but it never came to fruition. Then there was the notorious planned development of a former air force base in Rome, N.Y.—a scheme that cost the band \$4 million.

In 1998, Norton befriended Michael Tobin, a former director with the Empire State Development agency and former mayor of Pittsburgh, N.Y. Tobin was intrigued by Norton's push for economic development on the reserve and, along with business partner Jay Stinson, approached the grand chief with the idea of a large information hub that would give him to online gaming companies. That came a little lack. After being offered Tobin floated the idea of building a data centre. Mohawk workers were contracted to build a pipeline alongside the train bridge running from Kahnawake to the Island of Montreal. Current Grand Chief Mike Delisle says his employees "now asked what the pipe was for, and was told that the railway bridge link was part of a major three-topic trunk line serving much of Eastern Canada and New York. The trifecta was complete: not only Kahnawake close to large markets in Montreal and the U.S. and its government open to large-scale economic development, it was literally steps away from one of the largest data centres in the country.

All the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake needed was a set of regulations to govern its licenses. There were no licensing laws, so the licensing and operation of gambling sites without provincial consent is illegal under the Criminal Code. So Kahnawake enlisted former New Jersey attorney General Frank Caputo to draft the regulations. Mohawk Internet Technologies was born.

MGT is housed in a grey concrete slab of a building that once housed Oncology Health, a manufacturer of therapeutic machines. Visions—there are six winged angels on MGT's twelve-meter—surround their walls and colleagues at the door. And there they are and on paper approvals. Upstairs, the 300 or so staff sit through the large MGT office, hardly bumping in uncanny silence.

The gam of the place at behind several keycarded doors, inside every windowless room. 360 racks holding hundreds upon hundreds of computer servers, all humming

and blinking along with the traffic of 443 online sites licensed by the Mohawk Gaming Council. The computers all but covered and discharge heat into an airless under. The tubular floors vibrate from the electricity. The temperature never varies from 19° C, and should the constant flow of electricity from Hydro-Quebec ever falter, four massive diesel-powered generators are on 24-hour standby. It's for this level of reliability that online gaming companies pay a \$10,000 yearly licensing fee, as well as part of their yearly revenues, for MGT's services. "Stability is key," says Chuck Bennett, a bullet-headed father of three who serves

as a clerk of the Montreal National casino. As a band member vision for MGT's future, the company grows it has covered four times since its inception in 1999—and the community under the myriad of land claims with the federal government. Delisle



MO GOG founder Calvin Ayre (top) has been grinding for a fight since U.S. governments banned online gambling last year, but his businesses support thousands of jobs.

on the elected board of Kahnawake's economic development arm. "We're not in the online gaming industry. We're in data centre. We are wins, we are the electrical backbone, the fibre-optic backbone, the data housing and management service arm."

This year, Kahnawake projects profit to be \$10 million, according to Grand Chief Delisle. Among other projects, that paid for the development of Mohawk e-commerce software by American language company iKosmos. Since Delisle, a building former site

uses a day when Kahnawake is able to pull out of the Indian Act altogether—to separate from Canada, in other words. "It's time for us to take the next step," Delisle says. "We are very proud of our own workers' talents, and our ability to survive, but nowhere is an opportunity to work smart. The technology is here, and we have the opportunity to use it, as well as pulling our chests in terms of production as well. I think it's a lot of work. And we are still cutting our teeth. This has to be measured by the end of the year."



A CASE FOR NO PROFIT, BUT THE FEES WERE FINE. Lawyer from New York City firms will have to defend themselves in a suit over a state bid to make the province's law. The lawyers had taken client Victorio's money's case, an alleged mismanagement of money, but felt they had to court to lose. When Karmen (and the lawyers) they moved for a dismissal, arguing that Karmen's case was dismissed anyway because it lacked merit. A judge has ruled Karmen's suit against her lawyers will go to trial.

[Innovation in Action]

The Retail Revolution

Can Canadian retailers meet your demands for change?

Canadians are savvy shoppers, and they're demanding more selection and better service than ever before: in store, online and on the go. Can our retailers meet the challenge? John Dawkins, Retail Sector Lead for IBM Global Business Services, has worked with leading-edge retailers around the world, and currently consults with retailers across Canada on innovation. In an interview for *Maclean's* readers, he looks at retail's future in a changing world.



John Dawkins
Partner in the IBM
Global Business
Services Retail Practice



“There's a new wave of retail programs that emphasize customer centricity.”

Q Canadians love to shop, yet there seems to be a growing gap between what consumers are looking for and what retailers are delivering. How are Canadian retailers meeting consumers' expectations?

A Recent surveys show that consumers are somewhat disappointed with retail offerings in North America — not just in Canada. There's too much emphasis in the product offerings and the shopping experience

The new customer who is 25 or younger has grown up with a laptop at school, high-speed Internet and gaming. They expect to be able to seamlessly shop multi-channel: in-store, on the Web, over the phone. Right now, those channels are really siloed — they're not connected as well as they could be. Some retailers are rising to the challenge, and some are being left behind.

Q If a retailer is falling behind, what's the first thing it should do to catch up?

A Sort out what type of retailer to be. Retailers have two options in

the marketplace. Either they have to be extremely efficient and focus on price, or they have to offer a fantastic customer experience that's quantified to the customer's needs. The middle is no place to be.

Q Today many consumers find shopping a chore. How can technology make shopping faster?

A One solution is kiosks — stand-alone units you can use to find information or access store services through the Internet. IBM is doing a lot of work with retail kiosks. Consumers have taken to them quickly because they're very convenient. We're also starting to see things like self-check-out, which saves consumers time.

Q Customers get frustrated when they re-visit a store and nobody knows them. How can they get more recognition?

A There's a new wave of retail programs that emphasize customer centricity. That's where you, as a consumer, provide your personal profile to a retailer, and they use it to help you. As a clothing store, for instance, a salesperson would access your whole purchase history and colour preferences on a hand-held device. Your experience builds on your previous purchases.

Consumers want more personalized help. They want to know they're buying exactly what they need. Is this the fastest product, or is it the most current fashion? More and more, building loyalty has less to do with giving out rewards, and more to do with the experience.

Q Many consumers complain they can't find helpful, qualified salespeople. What are retailers doing about this?

A Retailers are using e-learning to teach associates product

knowledge and how to assist clients. IBM is also helping retailers use hand-held devices to do a lot of non-selling work, so associates can spend more time with customers.

Q Do Canada's retailers have what it takes to compete with new foreign competitors?

A We're going to see more foreign retailers come to Canada with new ideas and different value propositions. For example, they're much better at multi-channel retailing than traditional Canadian retailers. They're very good at customer segmentation. And they offer new and exciting assortments of merchandise.

Canadian retailers have gone through a lot of competition in the last 20 years and some have become global market leaders in what they do. IBM has worked with a number of retailers in Canada to identify the better trends and the leading business practices, and how to build an infrastructure that will optimize their ability to be competitive. I think Canadian retailers are in fantastic shape to compete on a global basis.

To view the interview, please visit www.macleans.ca/ibm

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Smart guy: But how do we differentiate in a customer-centric environment?

Witty guy: Everyone else is going virtual.

Smart guy: Great. Let's get real.

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CALVIN KLEIN is clearly thrilled with his relationship with Morris and the Mohawks. "The Mohawks are it's exactly known for backing down from a fight," Agre wrote on his blog recently, citing the 1990 Oka crisis. "Although the residents of the Kahnawake Mohawk Territory prefer to call themselves the 'People of the River,' it was the name 'Mohawks' (which means 'sons of Bull' in some cultures), given to them by the European back in the 1600s, that seems to have stuck."

Agre has grided for a fight ever since a U.S. law-suit online publishing last year, and choosing a Mohawk partner as his base for North American operations is no accident. Mohawks have had several protracted battles with the federal and provincial governments over tobacco, bingo halls and land. Morris himself once paralleled between online gambling and the standoff over the legacy of ultimate fighting, a decade ago. "Do you know when mixed martial arts was first regulated in Canada? Right here. There was no appetite for it anywhere in North America, and we said 'Well a minute here. What's so bad about it?' So we sat down to see the regulations, and Quebec finally came online."

Still, online gambling struggles with an online image, and keeping companies on the straight and narrow takes a certain finesse. Last month, Absolute Poker, a large online poker site acquired by former grand chief Jay Narson shortly after he left office, became embroiled in a cheating scandal in which customers were allegedly lured out of thousands of dollars. Not only has the fallout damaged Absolute Poker's reputation and cashed profits, it has put Morin in a strange situation: his company is now under investigation by the Mohawk Gaming Council—the very entity Morin himself helped create.

For now, though, the legal threat from Quebec and Canada seems to be as empty as it can be. Despite claims of a lengthy on-going investigation of Morin's activities, the *Sénié du Québec* had a single charge against anyone involved in the company in 16 years, and no national company suits filed and lawyers say the police have yet to lay them a visit. None of which surprises Agre or Morris in the least. "There's no idea that we should be drawn and quartered and headwork," he says, bragging to his carrying way. "It hasn't been drawn and quartered for years. That's long gone, and respect that Kahnawake in 2007 is going to be drama, feathers and moonlight is absolutely wrong."

Gaining at the push to a better future, he says. And it's a future on which he's willing to make his reputation. ■

Investing tips for the cool urban hipster



THRASHER FUNDERS: Marketing to image-conscious 20-somethings

BY JORDAN TIMM • A group of pretty twentysomethings are scattered around a white couch. Backwards baseball caps and untidy facial hair abound. There's a hint of microcosmology as one hipster drapes his arm around another guy's neck, even as that guy holds hands with a blonde-looking bob-haired girl. The photo isn't advertising an energy drink or clothing line, however; it's tag line reads, "They invest. Do you?"

Thrasher Funds is a New York-based mutual fund and capital management firm, founded in 2005 by a young analyst formerly of Morgan Stanley. It targets newbies of Generation X and Y with investments chosen based on a proprietary model it calls the Demographic Convergence Thesis. The idea is to pick companies with products aimed to achieve in their twenties and thirties, and at the baby boom generation's disposition to feel young and cool. The result is a portfolio of any brands like Apple, Guco and Volkswagen.

Whether or not Thrasher will succeed in the market, its advertising approach is turning heads. The company invites young investors to come on board with as little as \$100, the website features video primers on subjects like "what is a stock?" and suggests YouTube updates for an effectively big sign on the standard business newsfeed. It's an approach that could pay dividends. "It's not there, it's white noise," says Toronto-based youth marketing expert Mia Valogic. "It's not a disruptive capital management or mutual funds toward Gen X and Gen Y."

But Valogic warns that Thrasher's image may limit the company's horizons. "Once you're 15 years old and you've developed a portfolio of 35 growth with this company, do you really want to say that? When you grow out of the baseball cap and ripped jeans, maybe you want your money to grow out of these as well." Fashion trends may come and go—but making money seems always to be an style. ■

Lululemon runs into a seaweed stink

BY JASON KIRBY • As of last Friday the 2005 Sport Illustrated Swimsuit issue was a well-oiled spring of underwear. Made partly from seaweed, it released amino acids upon contact with sweaty skin that fought inflammation, bacteria and stress, all while detoxifying the body. By Saturday evening it was just a \$60 pre-shower spandex tank top.

It took just hours for the fast-growing Vancouver yoga retailer to respond to an order from competition regulators to ditch the more grandiose health claims about its seaweed clothing. Lululemon dropped all reference to algae from its website and stores and is now reworking the "therapeutic attributes" of ultra-therapeutic fibers, such as water (large fight tank) and soy (light bra).

The show-face follows a report last week in the New York Times that found some trace of seaweed in Lululemon's clothing.



BONER question: whether the shorts contain seaweed at all

One of the most high-flying claims down in the past: The company says its own tests found seaweed, but the company had no choice but to comply with regulators. Robert Meers, Lululemon's CEO, said the company will take back clothing from any customers who are still not convinced.

In the past it has rarely denied its when clothing and necessary companies made health claims about their products. In 2004, short-term Hamilton was forced for buying that organic swimsuits in its Maine store; gold when helped women radiation. Elsewhere, eventually moved the wonder how. Last year, an Illinois court found the maker of the Q-Ray bra, still to relieve pain through "ionization," guilty of deceptive marketing.

The big question is whether the Great Seaweed Cap of 2007 will bring Lululemon's style. Its store in downtown Vancouver was bustling Saturday, and one woman said the still likes the clothes, albeit no algae. Besides, if shoppers really are seaweed, they're already jolting a few black dots on the road. ■

THE SEXIEST MEN ALIVE



Suddenly the trophy catch in the dating market is the newly single older guy

BY ANNE KINGSTON

Bshould the lion new property anchoring market circles older than George Clooney, suggest that Brad Pitt, infinitely more assuaged than Orlando Bloom, TV's talking the freshly single senior man who, if popular culture is an indicator, is hunted down with the kind of predatory precision typically reserved for wildlife.

The chase for the septuagenarian bachelor is increasingly a theme in film and the age-driven by an aging Viagra-wielded baby boom eager to reframe 70 as the new 50. Director Susan Seidelman, who tipped into '80s new wave romance with her 1987 movie *Suddenly Seeking Susan* starring Madonna, most recently turned her lens on geriatric romance in *The Joyman Beach Club*, a comedy released earlier this year set in Florida retirement community and featuring a senior colleague of Ulysses Cleaver.

The term "senior's brigade," a quaint coinage used to describe the parade of older women who descended on the newly single male beachside courtship as a way to enter his house and heart, as the title of playwright Robert John Ford's acclaimed comedy about four widows' creative strategies to meet men—including trolling obituaries looking for men of their widowers. An off-Broadway production is in the works.

The widow's Amy Cohen's way 2000 movie *or The Last Bloomer's Revolution*, in which she parallels her fallow dating life as a single thirtysomething woman in New York City with the plentiful supply of women available to her newly widowed 75-year-old father, Murray. "Nobody could have predicted the amount of attention he got," Cohen says. "He got lots and lots of roses—written on Post-its, flowered stationery, scraps of paper." He seemed so much home cooking, the writer, that one of her friends observed, "it's like he has groupies, except instead of waiting in his hotel suite naked they bake him Bundt cakes."

HBO has just bought the rights to the movie, which is set in star Sarah Jessica Parker.

Equally ripe for cinematic dramatization are the male-on-male mating rituals that play out in retirement complexes across the country. At Hushon Place residence in downtown Toronto, where the average age is 85, male residents who do date often live a targeted down-film of life's existence at the Playboy residence. Hushon marketing manager Leslie Wehrle recalls one male resident who juggled three women simultaneously before deciding to move in with another woman who lives in Ottawa. Another man took up with the daughter of a fellow resident. A woman who used to live there recalls the ripple of excitement when a "hale and hearty" retired judge moved in. "He was absolutely surrounded by women in the dining room," she says. "Just awestruck."

The popularity of the post-40 single man is matched by the more fashionable rituals that make life all about supply and demand. Given the stats, he's a newly single prospectus, a potential estate market. In Canada, unmarried women over the age of 65 outnumbered single men by at least 5 to 1, an average, with the ratio rising as high as 5 to 1 for

widows-to-widowers. The gap narrowing, in men are living longer, yet a significant ratio difference. In 2001, there were 75 men aged 65 or older for every 100 women in the same age group, compared to 72 per 100 women in 1991. The fact women have an average life expectancy of 81 versus 78 for men widens the differential further. At Hushon Place, the 30 per cent male population (many of the men are in couples) is something of a marketing tool. "It's pretty unbalanced," says Wehrle.

Statistics don't fail to convey the more subtle culteries underlying late-in-life romance—the fact that men who've been widowed or divorced tend to form new romantic relationships far more quickly and frequently than women. The University of Chicago's "National Social Life, Health and Aging Project," published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in August 2002, revealed as the most comprehensive study of older sexuality, revealed 76 per cent of men aged 75 to 84 had a spouse or an intimate partner, compared with just 49 per cent of women in the same age group. Thanks about why more couples so rapidly abandon most of which ended unhappy marriages, men get more out of being married than women do, men lack the social networks that women need to ride out, men far outlive more than women.

Step away from the romance, however, and older men re-partner for a simple reason: because they can. Sociologist Deborah van den Heuvel, a professor in the gerontology department at St. Thomas University in Fredericton and author of *The Widowed Self: The Older Woman's Journey Through Widowhood*, a recently written book about widows. As she sees it, "Reframing a new woman is a narrative quest of widowhood for men," contrary to the experience of widows. Even facing in the large number of women who say they don't want to remarry, a supply-demand imbalance exists, van den Heuvel points out. "There



'It's like he has groupies, except instead of waiting in his hotel suite naked they bake him Bundt cakes'

age 35 there are none around for every widower so if only one third want to remarry, it's still two in one. Then there's another five-year gap in life expectancy. Women tend to marry men who are at least two years older, that's seven years, and when men marry after widowhood or divorce they tend to marry women younger than their own wives. That's how it happens."

Late-in-life romance betrays other cruel arithmetic, namely that the pool of potential partners tends to evaporate for women as they age, whereas it expands for men. Van den Hoonaard recalls once meeting a 70-year-old man who told her he wasn't interested in women his age. "My wife was 70," he told her. "But she was really young." Van den Hoonaard says that age isn't an issue when couples grow old together but is when they re-enter the dating market. "When women get to a certain age, they begin to worried about their menfolk," she says. (Men say they remain single usually say it's because the women they desire are too young to consider them, she notes.)

Doubtless standards abound. For one, a 60-plus man will be set up almost acutely that a single woman of similar vintage. Cohen says people seem eager to participate for their fathers, even while her mother's dying of cancer. "I was like a hellcat, saying, 'Back off.' " Older single men report being deluged with prospects from helpful friends. "Everybody tries to fix me up," says Alan Richman, 63, a New York-based food writer who has been separated for over a year after a 12-year marriage. "I could go out with two women a week for as long as I wanted." He is well, he says, compared to him that is not one doing the same for her.

Cohen says recent statistics on dating in men in women in their 60s and 70s don't match like this would be real extra being looking for a Victorian with pristine original detail eventually transforming the search to any available five-upper. A Toronto lawyer speaks of facing divorced men open to remarry who have struggled women of her higher culture and income than their. "I get a description of how well off these women are and I think, 'Okay, these guys are not a prize at first blush, but at second blush it doesn't seem to matter.'" Cohen notes that her father, who now has a partner, is very open about the fact that he was paired up with women who would never have considered him 10 years before. "A lot of those women were into leaving for more successful, more driven men, but when their husbands died and there is an attractive older Jewish man with an apartment on the Upper East Side, the floodgates open," she says.

Word of a very available male spreads as if by magic telegraph. A wealthy Toronto



As if the market wasn't overheated enough, younger women are increasingly pursuing much older men, a phenomenon playfully dubbed 'looking north'

widower now in his late 70s whose wife died 12 years ago says that after a six-year gap she revealed his eligibility, he was besieged with letters from available women, some even included photographs. It happened to be interviewed by Match.com only on condition his name not be used, he was concerned he'd be targeted again. Mike Rosen, the 59-year-old city columnist for the Montreal Gazette who says he has been "gloriously available" for three years, advertised his single status as a high school classmate that met on Valentine's Day, 2006. "I am separated, Jewish and prone to love of themselves when my daughter isn't home, and I'm heading to country music," he wrote. Mike said a dozen women contacted him within a week, he says, eager to meet him. He ended up going out with one of them for over a year. More recently, his contribution to the paper's food section about his suburbanized cooking habits resulted in emails from women wanting to find him. (He accepted one woman's invitation, had a nice meal, he says, but never called her again.) Van den Hoonaard believes such a man can be well-matched and without strings. "I think that it is women who are very lovely and predatory but [their status] information is misinterpreted [by the newly eligible man]," she says, noting that the female pickup on the Internet mostly played out in popular culture might be overstated.

In her own academic research filled with examples of aggressive female suitor. One man she interviewed was so perturbed by the attention he got called it on his phone. Indeed,

the private school boy-catching and motherhood of Gossip Girl appear analogous to some of the players by their senior counterparts. "A lot of these older women are like a beauty girl on prom night," says Cohen. One woman recalled the newly widowed friend being tracked down by a neighbor to enter for a relationship that when he moved into a retirement community she picked as overnight host and followed him. A son over in his late 60s who has not returned had some angry women trailing him down, he came to playfully refer to them as "black-woman." Ford says the senior in his play in which his character used the phrase was based on a true story.

The status chase in the widower. "He's a trophy," says van den Hoonaard. Further, one can be a trophy aphorism. "People would talk about how devoted my father was to my mother who was 16 years his," Cohen says. "Older women and, that's part going to make him even more attractive when she's gay." And I wrote "Oh, my God. I'm going to be awesome." The alpha widower in this regard is John Bayley, the former English professor married to the novelist Iris Murdoch for 43 years. In two interviews, Bayley bravely chronicled mating he believed took during her descent into Alzheimer's. He third, Watson's Haze, published in 2001, is an account of the inevitable intimacy he learned from women after his wife's death, many of them Murdoch's friends, students and fans. Two women in particular used his gladness to make their way into the 36-year-old's spiced house—and had. Bayley says

grief, he faded off their helplessness and advance. Within a year and a half of Murdoch's death, however, Bayley remained one of the couple's friends.

Underlying the urgency at this life stage is the knowledge that time is fleeting. One widow was the deceased interviewed in Florida told her that bringing a mate during the peak young Jewish retirement period if there is present, then added: "But, if you wait until there is one, you will be too late—some other woman will have gotten the man." Being first in the front door can guarantee results, though not longer term success. Look only to the voluminous remarriage of Paul McCartney to Heather Mills, who met the former Beatle less than a year after the death of his wife. Ladies. They were married within the year. A window of vulnerability exists after the death of a spouse, says a man who was widowed after 35 years, which can blur judgment. "I once very close to making a bad decision," he says, the very day after his wife's death. "I don't care how experienced you are, life, when someone that close dies you want to replace that kind of relationship as quickly as possible. (I don't think anyone gets accustomed to living alone.)"

For all the child-poking about some men scoring more congenial post-60 than they could have imagined in high school, however, after a certain age during can be unattractive. Men who re-enter the dating scene after 40 speak less of the idealism women than their counterparts. "It's not about wanting anyone over 60," says a 76-year-old widower who is certainly given notice of women to meet. "It's not about self-interest, followed myself to be food up river and it becomes like an interview." He says his marriage spoiled him and he's looking up. "I was not prepared to make for a roll at the top. I've had my roll at the top. I want something more meaningful." Richman says he could date with the best of

them in his youth, but found re-entering the dating scene tough. "People said, 'Dating is going to be harder when you're older.' And I said, 'Never. It's not going to be harder for me.' And you know what it's hard?" He has gone out with more than 20 women since his marriage ended. He says, but he yet to connect with someone. "I'm zero on the 'yes,'" he laments.

Richman is the exception. More common is the experience of Robert McElvinger, a 62-year-old retired doctor in Fort Collins, B.C., whose former patients included Tony Danza. McElvinger was widowed in 2000 after 36 years of marriage. A few months after his wife died, he moved into a local retirement complex where he was immediately the object of much female attention. Within weeks, he found a companion in Myrtle Haidoff, who is 70 years older. McElvinger says he both wanted and expected to meet a new partner.

Late-in-life love, inevitably, is tangled with pregnancy—and often unrequited love. McElvinger says McElvinger wants to marry but she is resistant, significantly, due to his Alzheimer's. "He's 70 years older than him and if I want, I probably would marry him," she says. "I don't know if I have that kind of power anymore."

For many women, the line is drawn over poor health, which can marginalize most of the way age does women. Women who speak of the desire for companionship often break at the idea of becoming a caregiver again—the "I diapered my children, why should I diaper a man?" line of reasoning exposed by one 75-year-old widow. A former resident of a retirement community, she says the story of a woman known as "Patsy," known to go back some 20 years. She began a relationship with one man who died on his back, leaving her left arm to become sick. "He had to be wheeled in. A caregiver was brought in to take care of him, and the woman is now to him anyone. The end of the story is she dropped him like a hot potato and he ended up in a nursing home."

While the place of sex in these relationships varies, the pattern of male potency is essential to be disambiguated. One man told his wife he remained fairly sexually active it knows to have to fight off women decades younger. "A lot of women are looking for that kind of companionship," he says. "If you can manage to be healthy enough, women will read you as

sexually active and do all of the work." And it appears this worlded increasing. As if the market wasn't overheated enough, anecdotal evidence suggests that younger women are increasingly pursuing much older men, a phenomenon dubbed "looking north." Cohen says a number of her friends in the 40s are involved in relationships with men well into their 60s, all of whom are affluent and vital. "It's the Fred Thompson syndrome, but not with the wedding horse left," she adds, alluding to the 64-year-old Republican presidential candidate who was 40, but, in 30 years younger. "There's a sense these guys are easy," she explains. "They're not filled with all of the crap that you find with men—I don't like to make generalizations, but there's definitely a group of men in their late 30s, early 40s, who have no many issues. And what my friends say is that they don't play those games. They're happy to have you, and they think you're just rightfully theirs." A 74-year-old widower who lives in Toronto says his 60-year-old daughter's engagement concern he'll end up with someone younger than she. Recently, he says, a friend of his daughter told him she was looking for an older widower who's generous and will young for him. His daughter immediately thought of her father. "Hill, someone," she said.

The last line of a certain age doesn't make any difference, says a 60-year-old divorced Toronto-based lawyer who is in a relationship, per se, but he is by much younger women. "My intuitive sense is that an older man might be advantageous for the same basic reasons—control. My guess is that an older man attracts women as a 'patsy,' but it's better taken care of by a man who is a little older. Women make that a man says. Remember guys in their 40s are much more likely to spend exorbitant time on their career. Providing the guy is well preserved—and the well-preserved aspect brightens the sexual appeal—you get experience, you get some vigor, you get everything that comes with the package, including economic security."

The New York-based Cohen, now 41 and still single, says she's attracted to "looking north." "I would like to find an older man who wouldn't have considered me an old person" but would appreciate her now, she says. "How far north would the look? She laughs. "I guess I'm looking to Canada." ■



MEXICO: SHUNNY OLD MEN SPEAK LANGUAGE
The Zazac language is an ancient to many speakers in just two weeks. The Mexican government has announced that the last two speakers are in their 70s, but they're not talking to each other in the language. In fact, they're not talking to each other at all. An Institute official says they've stopped speaking for "really personal reasons." It's feared that unless the pair starts getting along, Zazac will die out when they die.

WHAT'S THAT BUZZING?

Coming soon: robotic insects that spy, maybe even blow things up

BY SUZANNE TAYLOR • With all the buzz about flying robotic insects these days, you might think you're landed in the middle of a sci-fi thriller. Last year, Israel announced it would develop "louse hornets" to locate phosphorus and, potentially, kill enemy targets. In May, reports surfaced that the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) had funded a branch of the U.S. Department of Defense—now working on the development of "robobugs" that could carry weapons or explosives and be controlled remotely by humans. Then, last month, the Washington Post ran an article about prisoners in Washington and New York who claimed to see flying mechanical insects at political rallies.

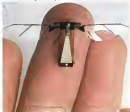
Reports like these evoke images of nanobots roving beyond our control—interfering with a mission to destroy malware. Fortunately for the technologically timid among us, we may be getting ahead of ourselves. There are researchers at the cutting edge of robotics working on some of the art insects, but they aren't ready to unleash a swarm of flying killer cyborgs. In fact, they're still trying to get their robotic flies to, well, fly.

Robert Wood, who founded the Harvard Microbotics Lab, came closest last summer when he managed to get his fly to produce enough thrust to take off. But any robot, which weighs less than a grain of sand, will lose wingspan, can't fly without a tether to supply power and keep it stable, and getting it to take off at all was a major breakthrough. It's something Wood had been working on since 1998, when biologists at Berkeley made a seminal discovery in figuring out exactly how flies fly. Eight years later, Wood's carbon-fiber fly was all the requisite parts: an airframe that acts like an insect's exoskeleton, actuators that replace muscles, a pneumatic system for a thorax, and wings that beat 120 times per second.

The idea is that an army of the minuscule flies, carrying cameras and sensors, could one day be used for everything from search and rescue missions and locating hazardous materials to environmental sniffing and traffic monitoring. And, of course, military reconnaissance (the project is partially funded by DARPA). "By having something very, very small and very, very agile, and potentially even disposable, then you can get places where other robots can't," says Wood.

Before the flies are ready for action, Wood and his team must overcome several obstacles. One is convincing battery manufacturers to mass-produce batteries small enough for them—something that's theoretically possible but not very profitable. Another is developing a sophisticated sensory system that will allow the robots to assess their environment and choose a flight path on their own (they're not ready to be remote-controlled), and figuring out a way for the flies to communicate their findings. Finally, the insects will have to produce enough thrust to carry their payload.

AMONG the fly robot's potential uses is search-and-rescue.



FOR THE MOMENT, SCIENTISTS ARE CONCENTRATING ON GETTING THEIR FLYING ROBOTS TO, WELL, FLY

Wood hopes his robotic creations will be flying around the lab on their own in the next five years, could be another five years before they would be ready for the real world.

Given the current state of the technology, experts are skeptical about the "mechanical insects" reportedly used to spy on political activists. "If you wanted to monitor people, there are probably a lot easier ways to do it, in terms of just reading a bunch of people with cellphone cameras wandering through the crowd," says Ronald Peering, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, who

says Wood's supervisor while Wood was a graduate student at who has been working on his own robotic fly since 1998.

Other researchers point out the difficulties of making complicated robotic parts, remote or not, by taking advantage of what nature itself has already created. A few years ago, scientists at Northwestern University connected a lamprey's brain to a robotic device, which the brain then controlled. Earlier this year, scientists in China remotely controlled a flying pigeon after implanting electrodes in its brain. But even if it comes to something like this, it's a long way from a swarm of spying spy robots. "Actually using something like that within the military domain is another question," says Kevin Warwick, a cybernetics professor at the University of Reading in the U.K. "I'm a little bit skeptical about it. It's still in the learning stages, still in the research laboratories."

But maybe not for long. Warwick, who made headlines a few years ago when he implanted a microchip in his own arm, is working on co-creating chips to neural tissue so that people can control technology with their brains instead of manually pushing buttons. People can't fly right now, but by thinking about it quite a lot, Warwick says, but similar technology is already being used in medical implants, which help deaf people hear by translating sound into electrical impulses that stimulate their auditory nerves. Warwick predicts that more advanced technology, including robotic insects, could be realized in the next decade.

In the meantime, our suspicion of techs of spy-cum-fly-sound-like, he says. "I think it's right for us to be a little wary. Just to wear glass goggles and say, 'Oh, it's all going to be wonderful, we don't have to worry, science fiction is just science fiction—that's a wrong'."

AUTOS PERFORM THE SONGS OF THE OPEN ROAD

Japan's motorcycle industry has created "musical roads." A series of car tires pass over the grooves in the road, the car becomes a tuning fork and plays a song. Allen to wearing humble straps on expressive shoulders, gloves are spaced at varying intervals to produce a range of notes on the musical scale. Motorists are treated to an approaching 30-second song with colorful signs and musical notes painted on the road.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) is pleased to announce the 2007 recipients of the Canadian Health Research Awards.



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Dr. Peter Singer of the University of Toronto is ensuring how life sciences technologies can move from the lab to the developing countries and how Canada's economy can grow through meeting their demand for these technologies.



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Dr. Wilbert Kohn, the Senate of Canada, is a heart surgeon, researcher, Canadian Senator, visionary and leader. As founder of the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, he set up Canada's largest artificial heart development program and is the author of major reports on Canada's health-care system and mental health.

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- Dr. Zee Zemel - CIHR Partnership Award,
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- Dr. Michael Reed - CIHR Regional Knowledge Translation Award,
- Dr. Michael Reed - CIHR Jean-François St Denis Fellowship in Cancer Research.

More information about the Canadian Health Research Awards can be found at www.cihr-sc.gc.ca/science/index.html. CIHR thanks its partners for their support of excellence in health research in Canada.



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EVERYBODY LOVES US

Maclean's annual How the World Sees Canada poll shows deep admiration for a country we don't seem to like so much ourselves. What gives? BY KEN MACQUEEN

They came from China and England, from India and Mexico—44 people of every age and race, from 13 countries in all. They arrived this crisp autumn morning at an imposing new office complex in Surrey, B.C.

They stood and raised their right hands—a little girl with bouncing pigtails and a pink coat, a digitized older man with a flowing white beard and a saffron turban, and all the rest—and they recited the oath of citizens

Man Canada, a lot—not the reality of Canada, perhaps, but the ideal of Canada, the idea of Canada. Canadian, however, have almost no feelings about their country's lack of independence from America's influence, the compromised integrity of its government systems, its limited impact on world affairs. Simply put, the world is in love with a country that doubts its own worth. "To me, that's one of those observations that came off the psychiatrist's couch," says Reid of the dictionary. "Largely we could spend



OUR NATURAL environment is the aspect of Canada many countries find most appealing. It's a great mix of fields, lakes in a second floor courtyard, Citizenship Judge Richard Parnell presiding. The judge is a cheerful man in a happy job. He told them about some of his own experience: the murder of his father when he was an infant, and how he arrived in Canada from India as a 17-year-old because his mother wanted to raise her family in a land of peace and security. Parnell, also a political science professor, told them how difficult it is to move to a country where you don't speak the language or understand the culture. Give it time, he urged them, and Canada will reward your investments. He told them how he built a new life in Canada and earned a Ph.D., and how this country—marked best in the world, he said—has much to offer them to work. "What makes this country great," he said, "is your presence."

AMERICA'S UNDEQUOTED LOVE?

We think they're the single greatest threat to global stability and give their president a score of 2.4 out of 10. The U.S., though, takes a more generous view of us. 68% (more than in any other country) think Canada is a leader in terms of human rights and global peace. They're also more likely to say Canada's greatest asset is its people. We get the benefit of the doubt in other ways.

If you moved to Canada, would you expect to have a better quality of life? (5% who agree)



Is the Northwest Passage a Canadian waterway?



Is Canada a partner in the military or peacekeeping operations currently taking place in:



WHO ADMIRES WHOM?

Percentage who said they greatly admire the following world leaders. Canada proved more critical than most.



... AND WHO DOESN'T?

Percentage who said they don't admire the following world leaders. In all, again, Canada was critical.



a lot of time thinking who that means."

Read and his global partners surveyed a sample of eight countries—China, England, India, Israel, Italy, Turkey, Russia and the United States—quizzing them in late October about their knowledge of Canadian leaders, making their opinions about Canada at home and at sea, as well as foreign affairs, and taking their assessment of Stephen Harper and other national leaders. Canadians were asked none of the same questions, generally, with less charitable results.

WHAT'S HOT TO LOVE

Fare of Canada fell into two camps when asked to name the "most appealing" aspect of the country. The narrow losses, who rate the "most appealing" aspect of the country, include 40 per cent of Chinese respondents, 35 per cent of those from Britain and almost seven out of 10 (68 per cent) Italians. Those who like "quality of life" as the single largest factor include 40 per cent of Israelis who answered the survey, 44 per cent of Americans and 10 per cent of Turks. What quality of life entails was left to the imagination of each individual answering the survey. Most quality of life factors that Canadians routinely list as points of pride—"social services" and "multicultural, diverse" society—were relatively minor considerations for these from other countries, though they may contribute to their favourable view of Canadian life. The highest approval for Canada's multi-ethnic nature came from

MEMOR, MEMOR, ON THE WALL

When the year ended earlier or then at the end of the year, it turns out, in Prime Minister Stephen Harper's 36th of Canadians said they don't admire him at all, but 30% of Americans, 27% of Chinese, 26% of Indians, and almost no other. Turkey admires him greatly. Perhaps Harper just benefits from Canadians' long look abroad, but he's not now he's stuck up against other leaders in global rankings.



the Turks and the Chinese, and only those out of 30 to them that it.

Ask new citizens in the Survey country what drew them to Canada, and you get a complex mix of responses. Big Green, a 40-year-old teacher, came from India's Punjab region in 1995, upon his father's death. The reason was largely economic, he says, still struggling with his English. "Good working

Good living, Good future," Simon and Lee Andrews and their two children moved to Canada from the Turkish region of England 10 years ago, in part because of the crying need here for Simon's skills in computer software. "We weren't necessarily expecting a better quality of life. I think for us it was more of the adventure," he says. "Coming to the West Coast was almost like the new frontier." Rafia Basir Alkhatib, a 30-year-old, is the mother of a 10-year-old, and she's been in the day-to-day life since when she arrived from Pakistan, a state on Mexico's Pacific Coast. She's lost or certain when she began to feel Canadian. "It just happened," she says, and held-right place: she'd been a citizen for a while. "It became my home before I knew it." For her, Canada's appeal is a lack of corruption, a sense of democratic freedom. "In Mexico, there is a very marked difference between the rich and the poor people," she says. "Here, the social life is different. You have a CEO swimming in the same YMCA pool as a bus driver, which I've never seen before."

The survey found the "best appealing" aspect of Canada is a mixed bag of impressions. Warm weather comes out as a lead, Turkey and Italy are prone to cite climate and weather as the main thing that drew them to Canada. Almost half of Americans (45 per cent) are turned off by "high taxes." Another perceived failing, for 41 per cent of Americans, is that Canada is not "U.S.-oriented." This perceived American dominance was

considered Canada's largest failing by Russians, and was the second or third-ranked Canadian flaw named by the British, Indians, Turks and Chinese. Another criticism of note: "One in seven Turks think we're boring—that's a fair remark," says Reid.

WHO DO THEY THINK WE ARE?

The Meridian poll discovered an odd lack of global knowledge of Canadian affairs. Andrew Grenville, chief research officer for Angus Reid Strategies, summarized the poll's overall Canadian knowledge questions to a 100-to-100 scale. Only the Americans passed, with a score of 77. An impressive 96 of Americans know the Canadian dollar was worth more than the U.S. greenback at the time of the survey, and 86 per cent knew that same-sex marriage was legal in Canada—by far the highest international scores. Last in Canada's knowledge among the countries, with a score of just 17 per cent, is the United Kingdom.



den. Considering that until 60 years ago Canadians were considered British subjects (until the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1947), that's a dismal display. "My mother's country completely turned back on colony," says Grenville, who is at British origin. "Canada, to the U.S., is like, 'Who knows, and who cares?' I feel abandoned, somehow."

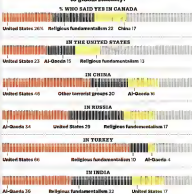
Conversely, there is a huge upside to this. Most Canadians don't know Canada, apparently, so love it. "There is a lot of ignorance about Canada but there are also these positive perceptions, kind of like this halo of positive expectation," says Grenville. "We get the benefit of the doubt. They don't really know us but they're pretty sure we're nice," he says. "So we get away with a few things."

On the issue of the environment, as an example, a majority of respondents in every country but the U.S. pegged Canada as a "leader in fighting climate change, and in cutting greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, we are one of the worst per capita emitters of greenhouse gases in the world. Fewer than 10 per

WHO'S AFRAID OF WHOM?

Canadian respondents actually ranked Iraq, though the U.S. doesn't deny they're doing so. In fact, more than 23% who chose the U.S. as a threat. Among countries, the U.S. was almost always the greatest threat. North Korea got less than 6% of votes in most places, and Russia less than 5%. Fewer than 10% anywhere chose Iran as the greatest threat—well in level (52%).

Which country or entity is the greatest threat to global stability?



cent of those from other countries, with the exception of the U.S., ranked top. Canada ranks on a green page that it mostly disown and disavow, says environmentalist David Suzuki. He points to a recent assessment by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) that Canada's 21 key economic and indicators, Canada ranked 28th out of 29 OECD countries. "Most Canadians are shocked to hear that," he says.

Canadians also get credit (or the blame, depending on your point of view) for their military operations overseas—and for a few in which the country is not actually involved. A miserable 20 per cent of Americans know Canada has troops on the ground in Afghanistan. Only the British, 80 per cent, and Russians, 55 per cent, say either they don't know or they do. Canada's troops are deployed there. Fewer than a third of respondents around the world know that Canada doesn't have a presence in Darfur. And only one country—Turkey, with a substantial Muslim population—did a majority of respondents

know Canada isn't in Iraq. In what may be the cheapest war Canada never fought, half of Americans think Canadian soldiers are about to get it out in Iraq. Reid finds that something considering the Canada took four years ago for not choosing to join U.S. President George W. Bush's so-called coalition of the willing.

The result is less surprising to two school-ans with a considerable grasp of the complex Canada U.S. relationship. "I think Americans have a little bit of a wrong view of Canadian forces at war supporting the United States and about half of them don't remember where," says American-born Paul Quirk, who moved from Britain to U.S. politics and representation at the University of British Columbia. The awareness of Canada's mission not to join the coalition in Iraq has diminished, along with American support of the war, he says. "It's probably been several years since the media has carried any criticism of the Canadian's decision not to join the war."

Charles Desautel, director of the Centre of Canadian Studies at Johns Hopkins University in Washington, agrees Americans have moved on, or forgotten in Canada's refusal to join the U.S.-led mission. "They [Americans] [Afghanistan] is a trouble spot and Canada is not for them, sorry they must be in Iraq, too!" Basically, that's called goodwill." Says Reid: "What a difference five years makes. The Americans are looking for friends, and I guess they're looking next door first."

American goodwill also extends into the Arctic. A majority of American respondents (55 per cent) consider the Northwest Passage to be Canadian waters—making the U.S. the only country besides Canada (66 per cent) to believe this. By contrast, seven out of every 10 Russians consider the passage as international.

THE GREAT GREEN NORTH

Canada is an ecology hero, ranking 28th out of 29 OECD countries on 25 key environmental indicators. But that's not what our global respondents think. Only the U.S. is skeptical of our environmental record, with 32% saying that Canada is one of the worst per capita emitters of greenhouse gases. (Remember 43% think we're leading the environmental charge.) With such a stellar image, who needs an environmental plan?

Canada is a leader in fighting climate change and cutting greenhouse gas emissions

(% who agree)



national watershed, while the rest of the nation surveyed, not to put too fine a point on it, couldn't care less. One-third of Americans support for a Canadian passage "tossing" the U.S. doubts, though, that it is based on an in-depth analysis of the implications. "I think, in general, it's more a matter of how it spent their lives looking at maps where Canada was at all the way to the top." Nor does he expect that the public view holds any sway with an American administration staunchly opposed to the idea.

STEWBO AND FREED MEIN

Last year's Reid survey for Maclean's found a degree of Canadian optimism, borne by a buoyant Canadian economy. This year's poll takes a harder look at Canada's "state of the nation" and their place in the national

psyche. Nowhere is this greater than in our own view of the justice system. An astonishing three-quarters of Canadians disagreed with this statement: "Everyone, as a citizen who they are, is treated in the same way by the justice system in our country." There could be many reasons for this: numerous examples of wrongful convictions, drug-bombing in Toronto, Canada's role in facilitating the torture in Syria of Maher Arar, the reality of police and the courts to stem the rising tide of gang violence, the failure of the Air India bombing investigation to yield a single suspect conviction. Only Russians (60 per cent) and Turks (50 per cent) have a kinder view of their justice system.

The opinion: Canadians hold the highest of their countries out much better. Half

saw the Canada "as a global leader in working for human rights and peace in the world." Just 15 per cent of Canadians defend themselves that way. Britain, Italy, India, Israel, Turkey and China all saw Canada's human rights performance higher than Canadians do themselves. And while a majority of American and Chinese say Canada has emerged as a bigger player in world affairs, 48 per cent of Canadians say "Canada remains a small country with little influence on foreign affairs" (Vietnam in Israel and Turkey agree.) Canadians are also much more likely than Americans to think that we owe more U.S. demands. Exactly half of Canadian respondents say "to foreign affairs, Canada does pretty much what the United States wants it to do," versus just a quarter of Americans. Only Russians,



WHO, US, POLLUTING: A synchro refinery in Prince Rupert, Alta.

(66 per cent) will "imagine a big problem in my country." This bleak view may be colored by recent memories of the sponsorship scandal that helped topple the federal Liberals. Or by the lingering questions around a \$300,000 payment to prime minister Brian Mulroney, which, subsequent to the poll being conducted, resulted in pleas for a public inquiry. If it's any consolation, respondents from every other country in the survey—with the exception of Britain and the U.S.—say our reputation is not worse in their countries.

As for the assessment by Canadians of their impact on global affairs, it's unvarnished: That, you, of 10 respondents consider Canada "a responsible actor" on the world stage. Compare that, though, to the 70 per cent of Americans who lead the countries' global opinion, despite having an unpopular war, or the 85 per cent of Russians and 86 per cent of Chinese who are happy with their international performance.

Other questions yield a harder Canada, self-evaluation. Almost 70 per cent of Amer-

icans see Canada "as a global leader in working for human rights and peace in the world." Just 15 per cent of Canadians defend themselves that way. Britain, Italy, India, Israel, Turkey and China all saw Canada's human rights performance higher than Canadians do themselves. And while a majority of American and Chinese say Canada has emerged as a bigger player in world affairs, 48 per cent of Canadians say "Canada remains a small country with little influence on foreign affairs" (Vietnam in Israel and Turkey agree.) Canadians are also much more likely than Americans to think that we owe more U.S. demands. Exactly half of Canadian respondents say "to foreign affairs, Canada does pretty much what the United States wants it to do," versus just a quarter of Americans. Only Russians,

FROM SEA TO SHEPHERD 33.6

Canadian views on the state of the world are as gloomy as the sea, but not uniformly so. Some parts of the country are even more pessimistic than others.

Corruption is a big problem

(% who agree)



Canada has a justice system that treats everyone the same way

(% who agree)



Canada is a responsible actor on the world stage

(% who agree)



ican's Macdonald, poll, has elevated Canada's role in world opinion. His personal level of admiration, 30 per cent, comes from Americans, better than the 27 per cent of Canadians who "greatly admire" him. Compare that to George W. Bush who is not admired "at all" by two-thirds of Americans. British and Russian respondents, by three-quarters of Canadians and 59 per cent of Turks. International dislike of Harper—save for the 56 per cent of Canadians who have zero adoration for the man-in-mission. Bush is a cozy place to be.

What the world sees on Canada are important. The country itself may be caught in doubt and debate over how security should accommodate the lowering tide of disparaging culture, religion and manners, but the world has confidence in Canada's ability to do so. Asked what to expect "if you moved to Canada," respondents said about the board they expected they could preserve their religious and obscure "cultural" traditions freely and without restriction. "A majority in every country but China believe, actively in many cases, that they can work in the same profession they have in their own country."

Most telling of all was the answer to this question: "If you moved to Canada, would you expect to have a better quality of life?" Yes, said 71 per cent of Indians, 82 per cent of the British, 81 per cent of Chinese, 87 per cent of Turks, 91 per cent of Israelis, 94 per cent of Indians and Russians. Yes, life in Canada would be better, said 91 per cent of Americans, living in the wealthiest, most powerful nation on earth.

The world sees something good here, if only the goodness of their things. Dances, the American academics, kept returning to the power of their response, and all the beyond goodwill mountains. "Nobody," he says, "could disagree with an image like that."

Then reporter arrived back at his Vancouver office after the closing ceremony to find his message light blinking. It was a call from Rishi Bhat, the young brother and new citizen. Although he did not know of the poll results, there was something the latter instinctively about his fellow Canadian, something that troubled him. "Canadians, they take for granted what we have here, what a lot of other countries don't offer, like freedom and a great way of living," he said in his message. "Just let your readers know that the one [and] thing we can do to your country is to take for granted what you have here. Thank you, and have a great day."

The reporter thought back to what Judge Pineda had said to Bhat and the other two hours before: "What makes this country great is your presence." He reached across a desktop full of charts and graphs measuring threatened and north of America. He pressed a button to save his message. M

HOW WE DID IT

Methodology: Angus Reid Strategix conducted online surveys between Oct. 22 and Oct. 30 among 400 randomly selected adults in each of eight countries: Britain, China, India, Israel, Italy, Russia, Turkey, and the United States. A similar sample of 1,006 Canadian adults was conducted from Oct. 31 to Nov. 1. The margin of error for countries outside Canada is $\pm 3\%$, 39 times out of 20. The margin of error for Canada is $\pm 3\%$, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current census data to ensure a representative sample of the entire adult population of each country. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.



A RIVETING INSIDER'S ACCOUNT

—The Gazette (Montreal)



A MUST READ

—Ottawa Citizen

penquin.ca



FROM RUSSIA, NO LOVE

The poll shows that the other subarctic hockey power doesn't like us much BY PAUL WELLS

It's almost enough to make you wonder whether somebody's carrying a grudge from all those Canada-Russia hockey games. One surprising theme that emerges in the Maclean's How the World Sees Canada poll is the somewhat frosty reception we seem to get from residents of that other sprawling subarctic hockey power.

Russians were more likely than any of our other respondents to complain, when asked to name something they don't like about us, that Canada is "too U.S.-oriented," at 32 per cent. Only 37 per cent of Britons, and just 13 per cent of Americans themselves, say that as our big problem. Russians were 100 per cent to believe, incorrectly, that Canadian troops are sitting out the Afghanistan combat. They are the least likely to see Canada as a "global leader working for human rights," at 26 per cent compared with 54 per cent in China and 64 per cent in the United States.

GRUDGE MATCH? Even Canada's most-memorable victory against the Soviets in 1972.

rule of law, and allowing different cultures to coexist," DeGroot says.

Finally, while Russians have a soft spot for their leader, Vladimir Putin, that's shared in very few places around the world, they are also quite well-disposed toward Stephen Harper. When asked how much they respect various leaders, Russians gave our prime minister higher marks than respondents anywhere except in Italy and Turkey. In fact, Harper gets more respect, at least of a vague and distracted sort, in Russia than he does here at home.

So why the chilly response on other things? If anyone's inclined to suspect the Russians have simply written Canada off for our perceived connexions with the Ukrainians, our poll data confound that theory as well. The Russians kind of like Americans. They actually like Italy more than Turkey and the Chinese to view the U.S. as the greatest threat to global stability, at 29 per cent compared with 66 per cent in Turkey and 46 per cent in China. In fact, barely more Russians see America as a big threat than do Canadians (16 per cent) or Americans themselves (23 per cent). Again, that matches DeGroot's observations. "In general, Russians are not anti-U.S.," he says. "They might be against specific George W. Bush policies, but the majority is not anti-American."

The surprise, to DeGroot, is the apparent Russian perception that Canadians are too close to Americans. "Many of the Russians I talked to even fully aware that Canada is not involved in Iraq," he said. "It was perceived as a proof that we have our own agenda in international relations, independent from the U.S."

Russians don't have a particularly rosy view of their own country: 94 per cent disagree

And as evidence of a lingering dispute that may have higher stakes than simple negative perceptions, Russians were likely to disagree with any Canadian claims to ownership of natural resources under the Arctic Ocean.

Is antagonism the word for all that? At the

very least, culture refusal to be particularly impressed. Yet other findings from our survey suggest it's not based on a jaundiced view of Canadian society. Fully 78 per cent of Russian respondents believe they would be able to absorb their religion and cultural traditions if they moved to Canada. And 96 per cent would expect a better quality of life here than in Russia.

Those results, at least, strike a familiar chord with Piotr Drobosiewicz, director of the Institute of European, Russian and Eurasian Studies at Ontario's Carleton University. "Canada is a desirable place to live for many Russians, as they see us as a quite efficient well-run state with lots of opportunities, more

than Russia's judicial system treats everyone equally, the highest level of disagreement of any country in our poll. And 96 per cent agree that "corruption is a big problem in my country"—again, higher than in any other country where we asked. Perhaps Russians are disappointed in general, not just about Canada. ■



THE RUSSIANS do seem to like Harper. They also have a soft spot for Putin that's not shared by most of the world.

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'HIS HEAD IS HUGE. EVERYONE ELS AS A HEAD AND HE HAS LIKE, TWO HEADS.'—ARTIST MARTIN FIRRELL ON USING ACTOR NATHAILLION'S BIG NOGGIN IN A PROJECT ABOUT HEROISM

STEVEN BRUCE MORE THAN GOLD IN THEM THIAE GIGGETS?

For 13 years, the co-founder of New York City's desert-resort resort development firm has been known for his upstart debuts and celebrity clients. Andy Warhol once paid for the 1,000 bottles of his new wine, and Jackie Kennedy pleaded for the recipe for the signature Fennos Hot Chocolate. Last week, things were looking up yet again as entrepreneur Steven Bruce after he unveiled the Fennos brand chocolate. A blend of 78 percent cacao had won five grams of edible gold. At US\$15,000, Galeotti World Records named it the world's most expensive dessert, and a grabbed headlines around the world. "I wouldn't be surprised if we see gold and silver in Middle Eastern perfume shops within a few months," Bruce said. But then his happy discovery at Fennos got a little more, more, more, and "over 100 coaches" following the restaurant. Offshoots of the success include the use of gold, tea, and celebrity personalities as well.

KIM ROY HURDING THE TORCH FOR A BELOVED UNCLE

When the star of movies such as *Blues Brothers* and the TV series *Philly*, filmmaker's Nathan Fillion has become the biggest hero in recent memory—all for movies of him. British actor Martin Firrell has created an outdoor exhibit on one of London's oldest skyscrapers, Seattle House, in which Fillion appears. He portrayed the actor's companion in the movie *Blues Brothers*. In the past, the artist has made great progress on the side of the British House of Parliament and other affairs. He was often by Fillion's side, but he's not a perfect look. "When they start in London, Firrell was struck at how large the actor's head is. 'His head shape,' Fillion says, 'is like a head, and he has like, two heads.' That inspired Fillion to grumble." But instead of grumbling, he's now been awarded a big award for good looking. "During the our first exhibition, his image alternates with that of Bruce Jagger, who portrays the equally giant face of female heroism."

NATHAN FILLION A BIG HEAD JUST GOT BIGGER

Already the star of movies such as *Blues Brothers* and the TV series *Philly*, filmmaker's Nathan Fillion has become the biggest hero in recent memory—all for movies of him. British actor Martin Firrell has created an outdoor exhibit on one of London's oldest skyscrapers, Seattle House, in which Fillion appears. He portrayed the actor's companion in the movie *Blues Brothers*. In the past, the artist has made great progress on the side of the British House of Parliament and other affairs. He was often by Fillion's side, but he's not a perfect look. "When they start in London, Firrell was struck at how large the actor's head is. 'His head shape,' Fillion says, 'is like a head, and he has like, two heads.' That inspired Fillion to grumble." But instead of grumbling, he's now been awarded a big award for good looking. "During the our first exhibition, his image alternates with that of Bruce Jagger, who portrays the equally giant face of female heroism."

LORD DRAYTON FORSAKING WHITEHALL, HE'S OFF TO THE RACES

He was one of "Lord's circle," a number of former prime minister Tony Blair's inner circle, serving as his minister of state for defence equipment since 2005. But now, Lord Drayton has quit the cabinet of Blair's successor, Gordon Brown, to concentrate fully on his own business, a company for professional services. Drayton is now a "unique opportunity" to pursue a long standing dream of competing in a Le Mans 24-hour race. A successful businessman before he entered politics, Drayton is known for promoting "green racing." He drove one of his own British GT championship race on an Aston Martin V8800 that runs on "bio ethanol." Drayton told Drayton he's welcome back in cabinet any time. But a former chief of defence staff and he doubted that Drayton quit just to race cars. He believes the industry was fed up with not being able to make progress. Britain's unique military procurement process. Working on a track is clearly pushing the limits of the bureaucracy.

VACLAV HAVEL A THEATRE COMPANY MAKES HIS DEBUT

Perhaps it's not surprising that the leader of something called the Velvet Revolution would turn out to be a show. Václav Havel is publishing his first play in 35 years and he is negotiating with Prague's Vinohrady Theatre to stage *Laurence*, an absurdist account of a politician facing the end of his term in office. Havel had been an acclaimed playwright before he became one of the principals in the peaceful 1989 revolt against Communism in Czechoslovakia. The theatre's events, and his subsequently became a prominent of the new Czech Republic. But his writing career on hold until 2005. Now his new play's birthday is back on, giving to Havel's theatre. The playwright's theatrical theatre in Prague had negotiated to mount the work, but Havel told the company that he and his wife, Dagmar Havelová, had to appear in the film *Laurence*. "I was it for her," he says. "I imagined her being in it." If the Vinohrady Theatre accepts his terms, the play will have its Prague premiere next summer.

KING JUAN CARLOS THE KING OF MERCHANDISING

When Spain's King Juan Carlos told Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez to shut up during a summit conference recently, several expected apologies. But a merchandising hero? In Spain, a ring now featuring the monarch's image is selling for more than \$2 million. There are coffee mugs, T-shirts and websites dedicated to the monarch. Juan Carlos's outburst happened at the Ibero-American summit in Chile, when the king got fed up listening to Chavez. Describe a former Spanish prime minister who was closely linked to George W. Bush as a "fascist" and "last boss." The king's popularity continues to spread. Venezuela's president is expected to be increasingly authoritarian. Chavez is discrediting it as a form of protest. Spain's and Chavez's "it's something that a lot of people would like to tell the president."

KEVIN RUDD YOU'D BETTER NOT MESS WITH HIS NUSS

Labour Party Leader Kevin Rudd has a strong chance of becoming Australia's next prime minister in this Saturday's election, replacing the Liberal's John Howard. The prime minister, who has held power for 11 years, is far from invincible. So it was a bit of fresh air for Aussie TV viewers to watch Rudd quipping on a popular chat show hosted by comedian Kate McLennan. (When McLennan's wife died, Rudd's Labour government, Kim Beazley, sent condolences but inadvertently addressed them to Karl Rove—just one more blunder in a famous series that contributed to Rove's exploding legacy.) Last Sunday, Rudd had a good with Rudd, trying to answer his own questions such as whether Rudd could beat Howard in his fight. "The guy's 20 years older than me," Rudd said. "If I couldn't, wouldn't there be a problem?" Finally, McLennan asked Rudd who he'd turn gay for. Rudd's allegorical chance was his own wife. "It's a man," a confused McLennan asked. "If the heart you say that," Rudd replied, "he'll tell you in the next."

LORENA OCHOA THE NEW QUEEN OF THE FAIRWAYS

Three Ladies Professional Golf Association queen watched her 26th birthday on Nov. 15 during the ADT Championship in West Palm Beach, Fla. But it was three days later that Lorena Ochoa really began to celebrate. She blazed out of the rough on the 15th hole during the final round on Sunday to claim her eighth title this year and US\$1.1 million in prize money. She closed out a sensational season in the all-time highest paid women golfer, with earnings of more than US\$4.4 million. Ochoa came back from a three-part, double-baggy on the 17th hole to force a ball only half visible in the rough. She won the ball to within a meter of the cup and parred out for a birdie. What she did for her next birthday? Plans are afloat to host her own LPGA tournament at her home course in Guadalajara, Mexico. Proccedures that event, along with some of the prize from her recent win, will be donated to her foundation for education programs.



TOP LEFT: STEVEN BRUCE; TOP RIGHT: KEVIN RUDD; MIDDLE LEFT: NATHAN FILLION; MIDDLE RIGHT: VACLAV HAVEL; BOTTOM LEFT: KING JUAN CARLOS; BOTTOM RIGHT: LORENA OCHOA

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POSH

SPORTY

GINGER

BABY

SCARY

More spice, please!

stage

BY JAIME A. WEIDMAN • "To be honest, I have never why I liked them when I first heard them," says Miranda Berk, a 36-year-old Spice Girls fan in

Halland. "But now, I think it was because they didn't care what other people think of them. And I could understand what they were saying in their songs." The Spice Girls are back, which isn't very surprising, and millions of people are overjoyed to have them back, which is maybe a little bit more surprising. Or maybe not 30 years after they became famous for trying to pass "cinnamon" off as a word, and five years after they broke up, the Spice Girls may be returning to a world that needs them.

The "Return of the Spice Girls" tour doesn't begin until Dec. 2 (in Vancouver), but it's already been in the news endlessly, the re-emergence of Posh, Sporty, Baby, Ginger and Scary, complete with a "Greatest Hits" record, has caused the biggest publicity machine this side of American Idol. Where the group announced a concert to determine which city they would add to their tour, apparently three million fans need for the privilege of seeing the Spice Girls. The missing city was Toronto, supposedly because our fan de Jovanka, young was high in Baghdad, where U.S. troops apparently wanted a heads-up from our troops about the USO show.

It's unusual for a novelty group to cause this kind of excitement when it reunites, usually its moment passes after a few years, and it can never be popular again even as a novelty or nostalgia act. The Spice Girls are often discussed as a female version of the Village People, the group that had for police uniforms what the Spice Girls had for leather miniskirts. But the Village People became a joke and a relic of the disco era. The Spice Girls have also been compared to the Go-Gos, an '80s band consisting of five attractive women, who wrote and performed some No. 1 hits. But when the Go-Gos regrouped for tours and albums in the '90s, they did so badly that the TV cartoon character Duck

Five years on, Ginger, Sporty, Posh, Baby and Scary are reuniting. That's a good thing.

BY JAIME A. WEIDMAN

men (Jason Alexander) quipped that same one was cursed because "he invested in the Go-Gos' reunion tour."

By the time of this issue, the Spice Girls were the big new girl group, and no one expected them to hold the public's attention (instead, it's as if nothing has changed since

THE SPICE GIRLS held a contest to add a city to their tour. Three million fans voted.



IT'S UNUSUAL FOR A NOVELTY GROUP TO CAUSE THIS SORT OF EXCITEMENT WHEN IT REUNITES. MAYBE THEY'RE RETURNING TO A WORLD THAT REALLY NEEDS THEM.

1996. Which, given the way things have gone in the last 20 years, may be everyone's friend. Tim Robinson, professor of media studies at the University of Brighton who co-wrote the first academic article on the Spice Girls (it's "I'll Never Be Your Woman: The Spice Girls and New Frontiers of Femininity," written with Amanda Emma in 1997), told *Marked* that "for young women, the Spice Girls were surely part of their socialization and taught them how to wear big shoes, wear bright makeup and talk loudly with/about their friends. So for the young women of the time, it's nostalgic: being pop in a journal-

ist way to remember ourselves."

The Spice Girls have the advantage of the fact that they've kept themselves in the news since the group disbanded in mid-2001, whether it was Melane "Scary" Brown's pregnancy (she's now Eddie Murphy), or the informal friendship marriage of Victoria "Posh Spice" and David Beckham. "The post-Spice Girls have been tabloid fodder for the last five years, so they have become much more than singers in a band," Robinson notes. "This would be not only about music, but a narrative of celebrity through the tabloids." Even the biggest Spice fans admit that they're in this for the star power, not the music. (Justin Weiland, a fan on the Spice Girls' Singapore, wrote on his blog [shibini.blogspot.com]: "The girls are not exactly the best singers, but they can sure work the stage.")

That's not to say that the music was particularly bad, just that there wasn't much of it. Like many short-lived sensations, the Spice Girls never came up with a hit to match their first single (Wannabe), and they released only two albums as a group, plus one additional album without key member Geri Halliwell. That's an amount of work that seems small even compared to some of the "top bands" they were created to compete with. But it wasn't the music that was most important anyway. Most pop groups are put together to sing songs, but the Spice Girls were manufactured to tell a story and play a character.

Right from the moment they were assembled into a group by super manager Simon Fuller, the Spice Girls were like actors, playing out a role of five British girls on the make. Their Seven Days/ish nicknames were originally coined up by the band but by Top of the Pops magazine, and adopted by the group and its management as a way of establishing a personality for each singer. These names, and the characters they played, were so much a part of the Spice Girls' appeal that there were fights over who would cover the names, and therefore the Spice Girls, last month, journalist Sarah Paulson took to the

UP: PHOTOFEST; MIDDLE: JEFFREY MATTIOLI/RETNA; BOTTOM: JEFFREY MATTIOLI/RETNA

pages of London's *Daily Mail* to claim that the midtwins thing was her idea and that "in the Spice Girls' defense, I was upset that my contribution wasn't acknowledged." The music, even the clothes, were secondary, what mattered was that girls could pick out their favorite characters and follow the story. The reason their 1997 movie, *Spice World*, flopped was that it didn't have an original story ready as entertaining as the one the figures acted out every time they were on stage.

That story was summed up in two ubiquitous words: "Girl Power." The Spice Girls didn't invent the term, but they figured out how to exploit it. By 1996, "feminism" had become a dirty word, but "Girl Power" was a sweet, something else, a celebration of the girlies.

in popular culture, and when cable TV brought us the girls of *Sex and the City*, who were basically unisex, slightly more dressed-up versions of the Spice Girls.

In that climate, girls could look to the Spice as better than average role models: at least, unlike the other women in pop culture, they weren't sexy, and seemed to wear sexy clothes to make themselves feel good, rather than to seduce a man. "Their presence in films," Robinson says, "was making okay for a generation of women to laugh at and love clothes, wearing the gear for themselves, not for others." Today, when skininess has become an inescapable part of the culture, the Spice

is. Madonna seems, righted to die so that the current act-and-glam group the Pussycat Dolls are "a complete male fantasy of what women's sexuality is." The Spice Girls at least tried to come on as a concept tied to girls' fantasies. Robinson agrees that "for their time, the Spice Girls offered a diverse, jagged, chafely femininity," and that things have gotten worse, not better, in their absence. "We've moved from 'girls get with my friends' to 'girls go to the shops with my friends.' I don't think that signifies a breakthrough in feminism."

If you look at where pop music and fashion is today, it makes the complaint about the Spice Girls look pointless. They were a lot of things more relevant than Madonna, but now the biggest pop artists among girls is Hilary "Lemonade Mountain" Cyrus—an actress who plays a pop star on TV. The backlash

THEIR MUSIC WAS NEVER THE MOST IMPORTANT PART—THE SPICE GIRLS WERE MANUFACTURED TO TELL A STORY AND PLAY CHARACTERS



GIRL POWER: The Spice Girls didn't invent the term, but they figured out how to exploit it. Girls could have short skirts, and still be strong.

wasn't quakes of a socialist women back. The Spice Girls taught young and teenage girls that they could wear short skirts, apply lots of makeup, and still think of themselves as strong and independent. As *Starry Spice* told *Entertainment Weekly*: "You can wear your Wonderbra, you can wear your miniskirt, but you've got a bit of intelligence." Or as a Spice Girls hater rips, *Spice Girl! Dumping Grease*, translated it, *Girl Power!* "consists of clothing only 50 per cent or so of one's body, and shaking one's assets [or liabilities, if you prefer] at cameras, cameramen, people, and so on."

But the Spice Girls were lucky enough to come along at a time when everyone was starting to re-evaluate the possibility that there might be some power in femininity after all. This was the era when *Thelma & Louise* became a runaway hit, when *Thelma & Louise* became a runaway hit, when *Thelma & Louise* became a runaway hit.

Girls' good natured self-confidence seems almost enlightened, at least when they sang "Are you as good as I remember baby? Get it on, Get it on," they were turning men into sex slaves, instead of vice versa.

None of this enough to create a re-evaluation of the Spice Girls' music, but it may have created a certain nostalgia for their image. People who accused the Spice of betraying feminism are starting to look at them almost fondly. Patricia Leavy, a professor of gender studies at Scotland University

against feminism, still new in 1996, it is advanced that Gen "Ginger" Hallelujah recently called feminism "a re-inventing of femininity" and nobody much cared. So the fans who go to the reunion tour will not only have the pleasure of seeing their childhood role models, they might come away with the feeling that these are better role models than the ones they have now. Or as Robinson puts it, what we've learned is that the Spice Girls broke up and especially since Sept. 11, "is that any more is better than now." M



PERFORMANCE OF THE WEEK... BAGPIPES

Yes, they sound like cats caught in a winter's storm, but Scotland's Pipers and Drums of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards have become modern stars, having played at England's music festival this year, the band will tour the U.S. in 2006, and he signed a \$2-million record deal with Universal Music, the same company that owns 50 Cent. Set a rap here the best! "The UK has gone bagpipe crazy." You'll have to be

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RETAIL THERAPY At one consignment store on Paris's Upper East Side tour of Manhattan, a Hermès Birkin bag resells for \$15,000

Don't shop New York without her

Pamela Parisi's Tightwad Treks guide visiting shoppers to the best buys in the city

BY JESSA MCENINNEY • Pamela Parisi's bargain finds in the thrift stores of Manhattan are legendary: a Kate Spade bag in the \$15 bin, a wool Ellen Tracy jacket for \$22 (retail price \$900), a \$400 Coach bag with the tags still on for \$60. The former show-room model bills herself as the "Elegant Tightwad" Shopper from Canada and the U.K. pay her to guide them to the best buys in New York. "You can get a pair of Jimmy Choo for \$100, or what's the name, Minko Blahnik," she says. "You can get him for \$100 or \$110."

Retail shopping became Parisi's career after she fell ill in 1992 and had to shut her clothing manufacturing business. "Money was very tight," she explains. "I had to figure out the best ways to get the best clothes at the lowest prices. I became a great bargain hunter, and my store evolved."

Her "Tightwad Consignment Crawl"—one of four Tightwad Treks to choose from—costs \$60 and includes three hours of paid shopping, plus a copy of Parisi's book, *Don't Take a Million Miles While Spending Only Pennies*. Free stop at Margoth Consignment Shop on E. 81st. "The Upper East Side of Manhattan is one of the most expensive neighborhoods," she says. The store's merchandise, she adds, "reflects the type of clothing that the locals bring in."

One of the "locals" is a "size 4 to 6 dress" who regularly brings in her stuff. She says owner Margoth Amigo holds up the store's newest worn, one of a kind Louis Vuitton monogram skin suit with Peter Pan collar from the fall '96 collection. To price the suit, Margoth discusses,Sophia Amigo, called the fashion house: "We have people who tell us, and we discuss how much it retailed for,

and to verify that it's real" (The same verification process applies to the shop's inventory of used, high end hand bags.) The suit, which checked out as authentic, retailed for \$1,000. The shop is asking \$699.

Margoth disappears again, returning with three more of the store's never-worn suits. The price tag on the Ralph Lauren jet black sequined one is \$2,799. The shop's price is \$425.

Around the corner on Lexington, Second Chance consignment carries Maria Ridolfi's explanation, "A lot of vintage buy this season's shoes and have them clean, believe it or not. They get sold from the stores and they get downshopped, and for whatever reason they keep them too long, and then they bring them to us. We get handbags that are new to us. People with money to burn, I guess."

Two weeks ago, Ridolfi sold a used Hermès handbag for \$4,100. "We've had [said] Birkin [made by Hermès] bags that sell for \$7,500." The same price Hermès charges, brand new, says Ridolfi. "You can't get the bag anymore," she explains. Demand is so overwhelming for the Birkin that Hermès has stopped taking orders. Now it's the consignment shops that keep a wait list.

One time a woman brought in a more modest Birkin that she paid \$10,000 for. "It was incredible, a year old," says Margoth. The

store resold it for \$15,000. Consignment shops "aren't going to try to sell you something if they know it's fake," says Parisi. The think-deepers are different. "Many of the people who work there volunteer. They don't know the difference."

Recently, Parisi noticed that one of her British shoppers selected a second-hand Chanel bag but then didn't buy it. When Parisi asked why not, the woman told her it was too expensive. "Why didn't you offer her what you would pay?" Parisi asked. The woman said, "Oh, I would never do that. In England, they'd ask you to leave the store."

"Well they don't have," said Parisi. At a consignment shop, it's okay to offer what you're willing to pay, she says. "Another negotiation is to take your money out of your handbag. Cash is king, under that credit cards. Some consignment stores will let you put money back in your bag."

At the CancerCare Thrift Shop on Third Avenue, a shopper spots a smart, black leather Ellen Tracy trench coat, priced at \$99. Parisi estimates the retail value at \$100. Still, the shopper is unimpressed. Parisi tells her to ask herself three questions: What would I wear it with? What would I wear it to? Would I buy it at full price?

"Some times you're at the fence," she says. "Maybe you'll wear it, maybe you won't, and you're like, 'But it's such a good price!' Well, don't be sucked in by that," she says. "That's all the stuff that sits in your closet."

WHAT THEY GOT FOR IT... A PIE-CRUST TABLE

Last month, an American tea table was auctioned off for \$155,677 million, three times the estimated price. The Fisher-Pew table, with a rim that looks like the ridges on a pie crust, is much prized because of the difficulty colonial furniture makers had in making the precisely spaced scallops. The piece had been in the same Philadelphia family since the 1700s, until an appraiser told the heirs the table was worth more than the house it was sitting in.



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FILMMAKER THEO VAN GOGH WAS KILLED FOR MAKING A FILM, BUT THE POORER DISSENTERS IN HOLLYWOOD WERE TOO BUSY STANDING BACK TO NOTICE

The silence of the artistic lambs

Most writers and filmmakers ignore today's epic cross-cultural war. It's safer that way.

BY MARK STEYN

It isn't part of the opening chapter of Daniel Sida's new novel *The Secret Servant*: professor Solomon Kasser, a Dutch Jew and author of a study on "the Islamic conquest of the West," is making his way down the staircase in Amsterdam, dwelling on the window of his favourite pastry shop, when he feels a tug at his sleeve.

"He saw the gun only in the abstract. In the mirror when the shirt never basted like cinema fire. He collapsed onto the cobblestones and watched he gladly as his killer drew a long knife from the inside of his overalls. The slaughter was ritual, just as the cinema had learned its discipline. No one intervened—hardly surprising, thought Kasser, for intervention would have been ineffective—and no one thought to comfort him as he lay dying. Only the bells spoke to him."

They rang from the tower of the Zuiderkerk church, long since converted into a government housing office.

"A church without faithful," they seemed to be saying. "A city without God."

Obviously, professor Kasser is an inverted character: playing havoc in an inverted plot. But, equally obviously, he dwells on the horrors of a Dutch city where the murder in similar circumstances of a Dutch professor, giving offense to Islam. Theo van Gogh made a movie called *Submission*, an eye-opening take on Islam's treatment of women that caught the eye of men whose opinions are no doubt paid for rather than their two thumbs up or down. In the six most racist nations, countries in Europe, a filmmaker was killed for making a film—and at the next Academy

Awards, the poorer dissenters of Hollywood were too busy congratulating themselves on their bravery in standing up to the Bushies even to name check their poor dead colleague in the swing Oscar in a sign of the year's decency. In contrast to Hollywood's self-absorbed "artists," Daniel Sida has named what is happening in Europe and thinks it worth making an item—misleading, distilling, a clarifying, to capture a moment. Professor Kasser's incident is a race called *Muhammad's Promise*, a brave punter from north Amsterdam. As one intelligence chief explains:

"The Amsterdam police found a videotape inside Kasser's apartment after his arrest. It was that the morning of Kasser's murder. On it Kasser clearly says that today would be the day he killed his Jew."

That line echoes the headlines, too. Almost forty years ago, a 13-year-old Pennsylvanian called Solomon Salim was heading off to work when he was jumped in the parking garage by his Muslim neighbour Adil Salim's threat was air twice, his face was ripped off with a fork, and his eyes were gouged out. And then Adil climbed the stairs of the apartment house dripping blood and yelling, "I have killed my Jew. I will go to heaven."

Western Europe is undergoing a remarkable transformation, and it's hardly surprising that Daniel Sida should want to reveal it. In my own more poetic way, I published a book a year ago on the same theme which the European bookies at *Muhammad's Promise* were pleased to exempt in their pages in a cover story called "The Future belongs to Islam." The title is not incorrect, given the demographics: within Islam, major in Germany and France and Britain and the Low Countries and Scandinavia: here a future, it

will be principally determined by the interaction between a resurgent Islam and a declining ethnic European population, and also by the mediation between so-called "radical Islam" and so-called "moderate Muslims." As the late Mr. van Gogh and the late Mr. Salim might tell you if they could, the cross-cultural exchange doesn't always go as well as it might. But, even when it's not ideal, it's still a process, and a transformation. Let me give you a small example, from last week's *Forbes* Standard.

"Women Get 'Virginity Pay' NHS Operations In Muslim-Driven Trend"

So, Islam and government health care, all in one convenient headline! According to one expert cited in the story, Muslim girls are "modest and they have a different idea of European." Which is good, doesn't it? Soon they'll be as assimilated they'll be indistinguishable from any old homegrown Britneyfied two dancers. Alas, as the expert continues, "But on the other hand, female circumcision is spreading and these girls are going back to their countries of origin to marry. And they will be rejected if it is found out that they are not virgins." Selection? Fine—hyphen replacement? And, needless to say, all the politicians interviewed by the reporter use it mainly as a question of whether it's appropriate for this procedure to be provided by Britain's National Health Service. "What nobody would understand is if taxpayers' money is being used to fund operations of this kind," says Tory health spokesman Mike Penning. "I don't think it should be available on the NHS," says Labour MP Ann Cryer.

High-low. Best to use "hyphen reconstruction" to parody a problem of bilingualism: overtones. Long term, economic, educational, profound cultural change is the hardest for democratic legislators to address, especially



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ARTIST Gwyneth Paltrow self-censors when it comes to Muslims: "I don't want my throat cut"

when it requires them to march into areas where your average square-jawed politician would rather not tiptoe. But the silence of the artistic kinds is more puzzling. The English novelist Martin Amis has found himself down to the subject and, for his pains, has been all but dismissed by the London literary set. (Full disclosure: Mr. Amis agrees with the premise of my book but thinks I'm a crap writer. Or, in his petri, Styrax's "thoughts and the ones are same and serious—but he thinks like a mouse.") But, even if you disagree with Amis, wouldn't you at least agree that something big and transformative is underway? Graham Greene, for one, would surely have had something to say. As he wrote in *The London Road*:

"The border seems more than a customs house, a passport office, a man with a gun. Over there everything is altogether different, life is never more to be quiet, the same again after your passport has been stamped and you find yourself speechless seeing the money changers. The man making scenery imagines strange woods and unknown of mountains, the romantic believes that the women over the border will be more beautiful and more pleasant than those at home, the unhappy poet imagines at least a different hell...."

All true, when you see the border post ahead of you down the road, or when the customs inspector demands "four papers, even here" that when I crossed the border comes to you? Not explicitly, but in a kind of demographic equivalent to the overlaid area codes of a North American metropolis. Amsterdam is the city of legalized gay and prostitution and a gay bedsheet parade. But it's also a Muslim city, overbuilt on the postwar playground. At what point does the mix Dutch gay culture means they're created borders? That, without giving their passports stamped or changing their currency, they're now someone in a strange land. That's something Greene would have

been fascinated to write about.

So why don't his successors? Well, for one reason we can turn to a recent panel appearance at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London to discuss the topic "To All Modern Art Left Wing." The formal discussion was decaying and predictable but things seemed livelier when it was opened to the floor, and the question of double standards was asked: "Causation" artists seemed happy to mock Christianity but curiously reluctant to haul equivalent jobs at blame. Gwyneth Paltrow, the Turner Prize-winning transverse artist who looks very fetching in his bride Disney-princess frocks, reveals that he self-censors when it comes to Muslims because "I don't want my throat cut."

But that doesn't entirely explain it, does it? Earlier this year, Channel 4 in London broadcast a documentary called *Undercover Moslem* in which viewers were up and down the land were caught on tape saying men to beat their wives and kill homosexuals off cliffs. Viewers reported some of the scenes to the local constabulary. The West Midlands police then decided to investigate not the free-breathing cleric but the TV producers. As the cops saw it, murder as any "hate crime" had been perpetrated, it lay not in the ugly and iniquitous of the crime but in a TV production so culturally sensitive as to reveal the nation's views to the general public. As *The Spectator's* James Forsyth put it, "The reaction of West Midlands police revealed a mindset that views the exposure of a problem as more of a problem than the problem itself."

Exactly. Did you see the latest results of *Democracy of the Bedroom*? It took with our race a couple of months back and not just because it had Nicole Kidman in the lead. The new version revisits the story from small-town America to Washington, and it acts as a metaphor for power: one million references to Iraq and Glen Paul of Bush

MACLEAN'S BESTSELLERS COMPILED BY BRIAN KETNER		
Fiction		
1 LATE NIGHTS ON AIR	1 (9)	
by Elizabeth Day		
2 THE FOREIGN THAMES	2 (2)	
by Helen Macdonald		
3 WORLD WITHOUT END	3 (3)	
by Kate Pullen		
4 A THOUSAND SPLASHED SUNS	4 (2)	
by Michael Henderson		
5 COCKBURN	5 (2)	
by Richard B. Wright		
6 THE ASSASSIN'S SONG	2 (2)	
by M. G. Leonard		
7 DISORDERED	5 (2)	
by Michael Ondaatje		
8 DEADY OF A BAD YEAR	10 (2)	
by J.M. Coetzee		
9 EFFIDY	7 (2)	
by Alison York		
10 RUN BY	6 (2)	
by Ann Patchett		
Non-fiction		
1 THE SHOCK DOCTORS	2 (2)	
by Robert M. King		
2 MUSCOPHILIA	3 (2)	
by David Sacks		
3 THE AGE OF TURBULENCE	4 (2)	
by Alan Greenspan		
4 A LIFE OF REASON	5 (2)	
THE THIRTY-THREE YEARS, 1912-1932		
by John G. Sweeney		
5 THE UNEXPECTED WAR	6 (2)	
by John G. Sweeney and Eugene Lang		
6 BEING CONFIDENTIAL	7 (2)	
by Jim Wong		
7 CLAPTON	8 (2)	
by Eric Clapton		
8 I AM A MURDERER	9 (2)	
(AND SO CAN YOU)		
by Stephen Galt		
9 MY YEARS AS PRISONER	10 (2)	
by Jean-Claude		
10 THE GIFT ON CLEAN	11 (2)	
by John R. Schuchman		
LAST WEEK'S CHOICES ON LIST		

on the TV screens. *My Bodybuilders* isn't about power so much as a seduction on fantasy. That's what the West Midlands police were attempting to enforce with Channel 4, and what the Ramadan police managed to enforce more successfully when they destroyed a mural created to express disgust at the 9/11 murder. Chris Kople's painting showed an angel and had the words "Thou Shalt Not Kill." But his studio is next to a mosque, and the owner complained that the mural was "racist," so the cops showed up, destroyed it, arrested the TV crew filming it, and wiped their tape. A "violent" society cannot tolerate any symbols as its most cherished myths.

Professor Koster, Daniel Silver's fictional garden visitor, would have understood. At the scene of his brutal slaughter there are no prisoners, just piles of talpals and the banner "ONE AMSTERDAM, ONE PEOPLE"—one messiah. It's not just that you'll get your throat cut. But that you'll get it out and they'll still bring the same happy happy face multicolored banner over the crime scene. ■

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BO. ACTORS portray Dylan, but at the heart of the movie is the resonating performance of ancient rock-er Cole Blanchett (far left)

Why six Dylans are better than one

The kaleidoscopic new Dylan film 'I'm Not There' is no 'Ray'—and that's a good thing

BY BRIAN K. JENSEN • The pop star has just been crowned a feminist. Whether the subject is Ray Charles or Johnny Cash, the song remains the same: got an actor to impersonate the star as closely as possible, and shape the broad strokes of a life into a rich mosaic of human frailty and triumph, and you're done. But in *I'm Not There*, Todd Haynes's kaleidoscopic portrait of Bob Dylan, is no biopic. From the opening scene, which shows the singer's body on an autopsy table, to the final image of him hurling to his death on a motorcycle, it's a carnival of poetic license. Six different actors portray fictional constructs of Dylan in the film—players in an art-house farhouse of legend and truth that no movie faithful to Dylan's shape-shifting spirit has any interest in pursuing could possibly be. "It expands him, it doesn't reduce him," Haynes argued in a recent interview. Seated in the corner of a smoky hotel room, blowing cigarette smoke through the crack of an open window, he made his case with typical brio, he said, "you're putting the truth in front of him, and if the container is always the same shape, no matter who you put into it, all you're telling is that shape-representing a formula that makes people feel all their concerns are rational and all their questions are answered by the end of the movie. To do that with someone like Bob Dylan is basically to smother him."

In *I'm Not There*, Haynes constructs a series of six films that trace the arc of Dylan's life, from his early days in the folk scene to his later years in the rock scene. Confusing the uninitiated, the film is a series of six films, each with a different actor playing Dylan. The first film, *Acoustic*, is a portrait of the young Dylan, played by Ben Foster. The second, *Electric*, is a portrait of the electric Dylan, played by Jesse Plemons. The third, *Agent*, is a portrait of the Dylan who was a member of the New York Folklore Society, played by Jesse Plemons. The fourth, *World*, is a portrait of the Dylan who was a member of the New York Folklore Society, played by Jesse Plemons. The fifth, *Modern*, is a portrait of the Dylan who was a member of the New York Folklore Society, played by Jesse Plemons. The sixth, *Legend*, is a portrait of the Dylan who was a member of the New York Folklore Society, played by Jesse Plemons.

as Arthur Bonner, Ben Whishaw is a poet being interrogated under a stark overhead light. In a road documentary sequence, Charlotte Riley portrays an emerging protest singer named Jack Rollins. In a postmodern counterpoint to *Godard*, Heath Ledger plays an actor who plays Rollins in a biopic called *A Grain of Sand*. He also gives us the most iconic image of Dylan, as a staid family man who runs off with a waitress and undergoes a messy divorce with a French painter (Charlotte Gainsbourg). Later, referring to the name Dylan of Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid, the film turns into a happy western, with Richard Gere as a shuffling outlaw on a fence in a backwoods hamlet.

But at the heart of the movie is Blanchett's mesmerizing performance as Jack, the part Dylan Dylan roaring through the late '60s. This is a proto punk. But, who has belatedly had role as a poster girl and delights in playing the role for journalists desperate to pigeonhole him. Blanchett's resemblance to Dylan is uncanny in the angles of her face and every eye that flash from seduction to evasion, the quietest of glances to capturing his strange, mercurial beauty.

Explaining his decision to cast a woman as his most iconic Dylan, Haynes says, "His physical form didn't resemble any male performer of that time in American music, or

anywhere else. He looked queer. I don't mean gay. He just looked queer—quirky, both body and mind of hair and mannerisms—easy to get genuine and spooky quality."

Blanchett's performance adds up to a detailed portrait of an artist trying to subvert his own celebrity and preserve his idiosyncratic. Haynes shows it in a flicker-and-whir style that mixes the visual wonder of *Dan's Look Back*, the 1976 documentary of Dylan's British tour, with an homage to *Pollin's* *Big*, in which a filmmaker is haunted to explore himself. The strongest scenes are between Blanchett's character and a scathing BBC interviewer (Christopher Bruce Greenwood) who makes a credible case that he's a fraud. "I'm Not There is a far cry from biography," he says. "It's about the colors of Dylan," says Haynes, "and not all pretty colors." He recalls Dylan's apocryphal, and the song, that the singer received a one-page proposal and one scene at his time, which include *Never Gonna Give You Up* from *Platoon*. "I've never spoken to him," he says. "And I've amazed that his manager, who was making the production and the script, never suggested anything."

Unlike *Across the Universe*, which lauded the Beatles, *I'm Not There* isn't a greatest hits package. The songs, which seem to come out of nowhere with heartbreaking tenderness, are often obscure. The result is a movie that won't be remembered or accessible today or *Walk the Line*. But that's only because it dares to be so brilliant, and playful, is so joyful. ■



WE'RE STALKING... HEATHER MILLS

Paul McCartney's second wife is stalking her feud with Paul's daughter, designer Sir Paul McCartney. Mills' ex-husband, the former publisher of *Elle*, says that Mills wouldn't give Heather any bargains in her London boutique shop beyond a 10 per cent discount. "But that just goes along with everything we know about Sir Paul," Elizabeth says. "What else?" Mills alleges that Mills stalked Heather's fear out of a photograph.



ALL THAT COUNT of the 15 tracks on Dion's new CD include the word love, 'heavenly' music for a best kiss or burying your grandma?

The critics vs. a lot of happy people

At least one reviewer's given up trying to shoot down the invincible Celine Dion

BY AARON WHEAT • What you think of Celine Dion's new record depends mostly on who you believe. Or at least who you read.

"Taking Chances, Dion's 10th [English language studio] album, finds her doing just that," proclaimed the Toronto Star's reviewer last week. Coined the *Forbes* magazine critic. "Are chances taken? Not many?" *Roll*, concluded the website *All Music Guide* in a three-star review. "It's an album of its time." Unless, of course, it's mine. "The album is a confidently generous of the times," argued *Forbes*'s New magazine in a two-star verdict.

In a way, then, Celine Dion is a man more proving to be all things to all people. Or at least something to everyone. This largely explains why she's been able to both sell 200 million records and annoy the hell out of at least twice that many listeners. And it's within this convergence of worldwide appeal and mass loathing that confronts those who have closed employment as judges of music's worthiness.

Carl Wilson, a critic with the *Globe and Mail*, has written an entire book about it. Let's Talk About Love: A Journey to the End of Taste is to be released next month as part of *Consequence*'s 15th anniversary which also was devoted to an installment to the critically adored and condescended. Naturally regaled by the likes of *My Heart Will Go On*, Wilson studies the cultural history of Quebec, travels to Las Vegas, consults a drag queen and finds himself at least appreciative of Dion. So much so that, in a review for the *Globe* last week, he concluded that "Taking Chances" takes some postscript in the declassification of Celine Dion." Which is a sort of high praise. In a way, Wilson probably comes closest to explaining Dion's existence when he turns to her

unintended sentimentality. And when he finally concedes that she is beyond critical judgment. "Celine Dion," he writes, "is always music to make anytime judgments on, but might be excellent for having a first kiss, or burying your grandma, or breaking down in tears."

All but four of the 15 tracks on *Taking Chances* include the word love. In all, the word appears 54 times, not counting uses of *l'amour* (three references) or *loving* (one reference). On the passionate song, "Don't Just Tell Me You Love Me," Dion variation herself, singing, *because I need, I need a man to love / I need a man, perfect me, rule over, shed over / Run away to my lovers, keep me a bunch of flowers and love. And then there's the ballad she cribbed from the latest issue of *O* magazine. Somebody told me once / You only get one chance / So live your life and do the best you can / Once a day pass by you never get it back, she sings on "Can't Fight The Feeling".*

Which is to say that Celine Dion is completely without cynicism. And this is why anyone approaching her music with a cynical disposition is so hopelessly thwarted. Shortly before *Taking Chances* was released, some reports that it would include "radical depictions" from her typical fan, Dion offered an oddly suggestive, pre-emptive defence of herself. "If you are a geeky fan, I hope, that's

fine. If my brother told me what I'm doing, I'm sorry that I'm enjoying my life. But that I'm at Splash Mountain." Odd as it is to compare oneself to a Walt Disney World ride that involves chasing live rabbits down Cheshire Hall on a log flume, it is an apt summation of Dion's art. There is nothing less cynical than the universe of Mickey Mouse and friends. A place of princesses, fawns, mermaids and talking dogs. Where it's okay to sing "Zip-a-dee-doo-dah!" without concern for the terrible racism implied therein.

The vast majority of human civilization is not generally disposed to unconditionally accept such a philosophy. The critic is, at the job's core, a consistency indices critic. Dion's default position, on the other hand, is hopefulness. And things happen in her world. Love, particularly harvesting, song on *Taking Chances* on disk with special shows. Buried deep in through empowerment and love is always possible. A happy ending almost always awaits.

If Celine Dion is, as that one reviewer noted, comfortably ignorant of the times, it is mostly in this regard. While Western society has begun the last couple of decades preparing for various apocalypses, Dion has relatively and lucratively stuck to the stars of love. Laughing her music probably makes you feel smart. But adoring her probably makes you happier. And Dion, in the steps over the 10th anniversary 10th record, is not only more concerned with giving you a world to believe in. ■



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Before you judge those beta you heard a great one / He reminds of someone that's honest / Your mind drifts from love / I wish things always stayed / Your words, it seems, he never got away... Put the gun in my mouth and pull the trigger / I feel so alive here / Put the gun in my mouth that tastes so bitter / I feel so alive here / You're no Jesus Christ / You're no Jesus Christ / No Jesus Christ from Seal's new *Find My Way* in *Argentine* Spaces

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ALLISON 'AL' KOCH

1955-2007

Nicknamed Ally Cat, he loved hunting and fishing—and the daughter whose cancer he helped battle

Allison Koch was born in Provost, Alta., just west of the Saskatchewan border, on Feb. 7, 1955, to Peter and Marie Koch (pronounced "Cook"). The second of seven, Al, or Ally, as he came to be known, drew some early bad luck: his parents named their eldest, Emerson, for an engine manufacturer; Ally, named after the Allison Engine Company, received similar treatment. "If you called him that, you better be able to run," says Emerson. "Through time and history, he's had a few lives. That's how he got his nickname—Ally Cat."

Peter, part of a seismography crew, dragged the family through summer oil exploration jaunts across southern Saskatchewan. Winters, he left them behind in Provost for northern work. It was only with the purchase of a farming equipment dealership in Claybank, Sask., south of Moose Jaw, that the Kochs knew stability. Ally preferred football, hockey and deer hunting to books and, with Grade 12 completed, took to carpentry. Work brought him to Coronach, near the U.S. border, where he helped build a power station. "Young, full of piss and vinegar, all those boys would do was carouse," says Emerson. Soon, a car accident left Ally, a passenger in the vehicle, near death and with a shattered left leg. "I guess that's one of his lives," says Emerson. On a fishing trip, father and son talked of what to do with Ally, who due to his injuries couldn't return to construction. Emerson hit upon the idea of buying a service station in Tuxford, a village north of Moose Jaw, that Emerson and his family could run alongside Ally. "Maybe," he thought, "I can settle Ally down."

Ally soon developed a reputation as a first-class mechanic at Town and Country Gulf, which opened in late 1979 and also boasted a little café that Emerson's wife, Karen, ran. In the early 1980s, with Karen expecting a third child, Emerson leased the café to Betty Ann Kuntz, a young woman who set about preparing soups and other daily specials. Ally became a regular. "I guess my cooking was good enough," Betty Ann says. "The way to a man's heart, you know?" Chief among his charms was "his smile—he had these nice little dimples." They married a year later. Two daughters followed—Jessica in 1987 and Jennifer in 1990. A year later, Ally left the service station and began work at Simplot Canada, a fertilizer manufacturer. He also became mayor of Tuxford, a post Emerson had held previously;

Ally's chief duty was maintaining the water treatment plant.

Ally, in his constant blue coveralls, loved old-time radio on 800 CHAB in Moose Jaw, collecting farmer's caps, drinking Labatt Blue, hunting and making his own bread and deer sausages. He had a way of uttering incomplete curses—"SON-OF-A—," he'd cry—that encouraged family members to stage impromptu impersonation contests. Recently, when Betty Ann went looking for him at his father's cattle

farm, she spotted Ally "sitting down by the corral with the truck windows open and the music blasting; he was playing Frank Mills, *Music Box Dancer*," she says. "The cows were standing there. They were all just relaxed." But life wasn't always easy. In 2000, doctors discovered a cancerous tumour in his left leg—the very one he'd broken years before. Surgery arrested the cancer but left the limb weak. During a visit to the West Edmonton Mall, when he slipped coming out of the hot tub, he snapped the femur, requiring a steel rod in his leg.

Then, in February, Jennifer, his youngest, was diagnosed with bone cancer in her leg. Ally, the residents of Tuxford and their extended family had soon organized fundraising events—steak dinners and street hockey tournaments—to help defray the costs of seeking treatment in B.C. Last summer, doctors in Vancouver removed a good portion of her femur and several tumours from her lungs,

calling the intervention a tentative success. That prognosis was clouded some weeks ago, however, when a CT scan spotted what may be a new spot on her right lung. None of this impeded Ally's frantic work schedule as he put up new street signs, maintained the roads and took care of garbage disposal. But it was little comfort to him that just earlier this year he'd been declared cancer-free.

On Sunday, Nov. 11, he and Betty Ann sat down to watch the Calgary Stampede (his favourite team) battle it out with the Saskatchewan Roughriders (hers) when the Stampede's faltered. Ally, disgusted, left home to deliver paperwork in advance of a work promotion. He never did return. Betty Ann searched through the night but did not think to look at one untravelled spot where rumours had spoken of a big white-tailed buck; almost certainly, Ally went spotting for deer. Police found his truck overturned not far from there. Uncharacteristically, Ally had not been wearing his seat belt. "He used up his ninth life, I guess," says Emerson. **BY NICHOLAS KÖHLER**

